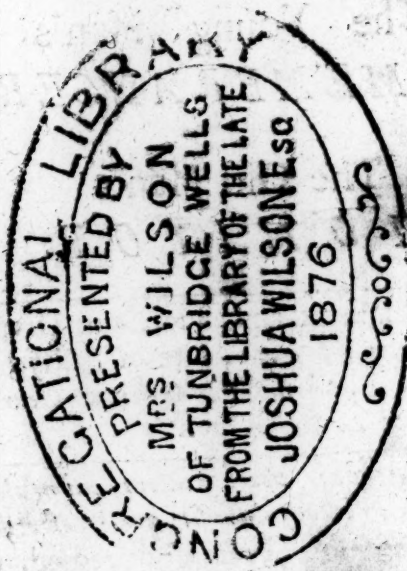


A
M E M E N T O
T O
Young and Old:
O R,
The Young Man's
R E M E M B R A N C E R,
A N D
The Old Man's
M O N I T O R.

By that Eminent and Judicious Divine,
Mr. John Maynard, late of Mayfield in
Sussex. Published by William Gearing,
Minister of the Gospel.

*Quis integram vocet aetatem, cui multum
deest, & quantulum sit, quod restat, in-
certum est? Petrarca. de remed. art.
fort. dial. 1.*

L O N D O N,
Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, living at the
Sign of the Bible upon London Bridg. 1669.



Unto the Right Worshipful,

SIR Thomas Wilbraham of Wood-
hey in the County of Chester, Ba-
ronet: and to the vertuous La-
dies; The Lady Elizabeth
Wilbraham the Elder,
and the Lady Eliza-
beth Wilbraham
the Younger.

To the Lady Meredith of Leeds in Kent,
and to Mrs. Elizabeth Baker,
of Mayfield in the
County of
Suffex.

William Gearing humbly Dedicateth
these ensuing Treatises, Entituled,
A Memento to Young and Old, &c.
And Pious Fathers the
Glory of Children,
&c.





To the Reader.

THE outward ornaments of Youth are Beauty, Tallness, and Strength of the Body, but Grace and Wisdom are the ornaments of the Soul and Mind: But Beauty without Grace, is but like a fair sign that hangeth at the door of a foul house; and Wist without Grace, is but like meat that tasteth sweet in the mouth, and breedeth ill blood in the Veins: and bodily Strength, and comeliness of Stature without Grace, it is but like so much Moss upon the body of a Tree, when there is no fruit upon the boughs. Absalom had a fair body, and a defiled Conscience. St. Augustin receiving a witty Epistle from Licentius, a young Noble Man, and perceiving he had abused it too loosely, returneth this answer to him. If thou hadst found a Golden Cup, wouldst thou not have given it to some Publick use? God hath given thee a Golden Wist, a Soul of Gold, and yet thou usest it as an Instrument of Sensuality; take heed

August.
Epist. ad
Licent.

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heed of making it a vessel of abomination, and of presenting thy Soul as a Sacrifice to Satan, Diabolus cupit a te ornari, the Devil desireth to make thee an ornament to him, and thy witt and parts, the credit of his Court and Cause: Young Men many times have sharp Wits, but as the fire, in green wood is smothered by the vapours, that it cannot shine brightly; so holy Wisdom in youth is often smothered by Temptations and Concupiscences.

Naturalists say, That the Butterfly spendeth the most part of her Life in painting of her Wings, so do many young men in gilding of their Brains. Youth is, (as the Hebrew word signifieth) the choice age of a Mans **כְּתִירָה** Life: and a young Man is called, a choice or chosen one. 1. Because a Young man was rather chosen than an Old, chosen to most employments of action, and Youth is the time which a man would chose to live in. 2. Because youth is a time wherein a Man is to chuse what course to take, and it is the choicest time for the service of God. Remember thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth, or of thy choice, saith Solomon. That is, in such daies, as either thou wouldest chuse, or else, such daies wherein thou art best able to make thy choice; then are we called upon to remember God. Take it in that double variation. 1. In such daies,

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daies, as a man would chuse, whilst things yet go well with him, before the evil daies come, &c. Flourishing Youth and true Devotion, are seldom companions: Youth, (unless sanctified) is full of vanity, serious intrisles, and trifling in serious things. Or, 2. In such dayes as we are yet able to make our choice, Death bed Devotion proveth but little worth; then do we rather dream of God, than indeed do remember him.

Good reason it is, that the Young Man should remember his Creator. 1. Because uncertain of the future of his own life, uncertain whether he shall ever live to old age; a Soul should not be hazarded upon such uncertainties. 2. Because the young man commonly forgetteth God, is most tempted by Satan, most violently hurried away with Passions. Youth is full of folly, falsehood, forwardness, of high conceits of their own worth and sufficiency; full of inordinate and excessive love of liberty; full of wantonness, it is carried with strong affections upon weak grounds; it is stubborn, impatient of counsels, and just reproofs, Jerem. 31. 18, 19. It is given to Prodigality, Luke 15. 12, 13. It is impudent and shameless, addicted to sensuality. It is the Emblem of a Young Man, to have a wing on one Arm, as if he had a desire to fly up to Heaven: but a clog on the other arm, to shew how the vanities and pleasures of the World do

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clog his desires of Heaven. 3. Or it may be Young Men are called upon to remember God, because riper age is furnished with most abilities; a strong body, a pliable mind, a riper judgment, affections free: Religion is not of so easie a performance, but it will ask a man his best. Or 4. it may be, what is gotten in Youth, sticks fastest by us, as a Vessel retaineth a long time, that odour where-with at first it was seasoned. God's service should never be given over, and therefore learned betimes. Nebuchadnezzar would have young Men stand before him, the King of Heaven much more. Thy Creatour will not highly value thee, unless thou hast been bred up in his presence even from thy youth.

It is a most commendable thing for Young Men to be courageous, and resolute in resisting Sin. Some Heathens and Infidels have been notable in this kind. St. Augustin bringeth in Polemon thus speaking concerning himself.

I was an Infidel, a young Man, St. Augustin deprived of the Knowledg of the faith of this, True God resigned over to all Non humano sorts of Intemperance, Wine, operi tribue- Love, Play, Rashness, were the rim, sed di- Chariot, which drew my Youth vino, Epist. to downfal. I was no sooner entered into the School of an Heathen Philosopher, But behold

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I was wholly changed. He upon the Words of a man, layeth down his flowery Crowns which he bare on his head, his Riots and Drunkenness.

How unseemly then is it, for Young Men that are called Christians to go on in Riot, and Wantonness, after so many enlightnings, so many forcible instructions, and so many powerful convictions and inspirations? St. Ambrose likewise brings in one Spurina thus speaking. I was a Gentile, (saith she) bred in the corruption of an age, where vertue was declining, and vice on the top of the Wheel: I was endow'd with an excellent Beauty, which by right of natural force gave me the key of Hearts; and I seeing it was too much affected, courted by wanton eyes, and served for a stumbling-block to chastity; I purposely made scars in my face, extinguishing with my Blood the flames of those that sought me; for I loved better to seal my innocence, as with the seal of voluntary deformity, than to possess a Beauty that served only as a bait for anothers Lust. How may this give a check to the vanity of those women among us, who in their youth paint themselves with an ill intention, seeking to gain that by Imposture, which they cannot gain by truth? and not satisfying themselves by adulterating their Beauty, spare not to discover in their Breasts and Faces the Impudence of their

For-

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Fore-heads. Oh! what will such with all their curiosity, answer to this Paynim, when her Blood and Scars, her Beauty disfigured, which served as a Sacrifice to her Chastity, shall accuse them before the Tribunal of Christ!

Cassian commendeth a Christian young Man, who having renounced worldly vanities, and betaken himself to an austere kind of Life, having received a packet of Letters from his

Father, and diverse of his dear
Cassian In- Friends, he durst not look upon
stit. Lib. 5. them but threw them into the fire

ca. 32. with these words: Be gone ye
thoughtes of my Countrey, and

burn for company, for fear lest ye tempt me to look again toward the things which I have forsaken: He feared (as the story saith,) that by the reading of their lines, and the sight of their Names, he should have been perswaded, to warp towards their Company, and the vanities of the world again.

Oh how ought all young men, that have had good education, to take heed how they abuse it, and the many instrumental means which God hath granted them for the exercise of vertue; otherwise they shall pay the loss thereof in the length of a corrupt and miserable Life, and their bones in o'd age, shall be filled with the follies of youth, which shall rest with them
even

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even in their Tombs, and drag their Souls into the bottomless Precipice, from whence there is no recovery. Many young people run on in much evil in the time of youth, adding sin to sin: but (as one saith) youthful sins may prove ages terrors. Many prophane young men that drink and quaffe, play and make sport, and farther one another in sin, what do they therein, but as Abner said to Joab, 2 Sam. 14. Let the young men arise, and play before us? Observe what play this was. Then there arose and went over Twelve Men of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth, the Son of Saul; and Twelve of the Servants of David, and they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his Sword into his fellows side; so they fell down together. This was their play. So it is with young men many-times, when they come into company, by their licentiousness, and drawing one another to sin, what do they but take the Sword, and thrust into one anothers bowels? and Labour (what in them lieth) to destroy each other for ever?

Oh how careful should Parents be, in the well nutring and educating of their Children, who are not only the living goods, but also pieces of their Parents? In Athens it was a custom, never to pole their Children till they were taught, and then to burn their hair, as a Sacrifice

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Sacrifice to Apollo. How should Parents take heed of cockering their Children in sinful ways: Indulgence of Parents, is the refuge of Vanity, the band of Wickedness, and the bane of Children. Look well to it ye Parents, (saith St. Hierome) That your Children canouse not in the cups of Babilon. The Sin and evil examples of Parents, is like rust which cleaveth close to their Children, and the greater they are upon Earth, so much the more malice and precipitation it hath; such children will one day complain at the Tribunal Cyprian of God, of the perfidiousness of their de-lap- Parents, saying, our Fathers and Mothers have been our parricides, saith Cyprian.

Ye fond Parents, behold Eli the Priest, from whose lips passed so many brave Oracles, who shined in the Tabernacle of God, and in the mean time for permitting youthful follies, and unbridled liberty in his Children, to become the Object of God's just displeasure: behold him cast from the Priest-hood, as a rotten Member, and his House deprived of that honourable dignity, and all his Posterity Condemned to die in the flower of their age: His two Sons Hophni and Phinehas, slayn in one day, his Daughter in Law dead in Child bed, and the Ark of God taken by the Philistines, and dishonour-

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dishonoured by Infidels: And lastly, himself buried as it were, under the ruines of his Countrey, as the last Victim of Gods Justice.

Eleazar is a fit pattern for all aged persons to follow, of whose mention is made in the Book of Macchabees, That being assailed with all sorts of Batteries, Banishments, and Torments, to make him counterfeit but one sole Sin against his own Law, he said to himself, out alas! The whiteness of that venerable Hair with which thy head is covered, after it hath grown hoary in the exercise of thy Religion, hath it not yet taught thee, where the point of honour lyeth? It is not enough for Eleazar not to counterfeit impiety, but to profess vertue even at the price of his Blood. Now God grant, I may not serve as a stumbling-block to the youth of this City: since God will make this day, a Theatre of my constancy; I will not be-lye the Law of my Master, nor dishonour the School in which I was bred and brought up.

Memorable is that story of Polycarp, that constant Martyr of Christ, and Disciple of John the Evangelist, as he was brought to the fire to be burnt, the Proconsul having most earnestly solicited him to recant, and renounce his Faith with promise of liberty, I have (said he) these Four score and six years served Jesus Christ,

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Christ, and I ever found him a good Master ; therefore, I will not now Blaspheme my King and Lord ; I will never do it. Many other words of admirable constancy and fortitude were uttered, then by this old Disciple, and faithful Martyr of Jesus Christ, which made him regardless of his Life, and resolutely to suffer Death for his Name.

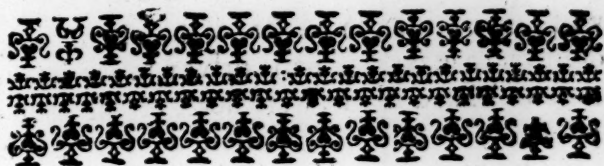
Let none of us then offer the blind and the lame in sacrifice to God, nor offer that to him, which we would not offer to our Prince, Mal. 1. 7. 8. This were to make God's Service a Spittle-House or Hospital, to maintain us in our age, when we have spent our strength in the service of Sin and Satan. This is not to leave sin, till sin leave us. What Noble Man would be willing to give entertainment to an old serving-man, that hath spent his strength in the service of his Enemy ? Why then should we think, that having given the flower of our youth to the Devil, that God will accept of the bran of our old age ? Therefore every one like young Timothies, and Josia's should begin to serve God betimes : and all parents should present their Children to God betimes, even as Samuel, whom his Mother offered to the Lord very young, who ministred before the Lord in his side-coates. Youth is not only more capable, but more curable than old age. If sin
get

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get hold of youth, it is more easily cured in youth, than in men that are old; as a green wound is more easily healed, than an old festered sore, which hath dead flesh in it. A man may almost as well give Physick to a dead man, as counsel to many an old man. If sin grow to an habit and custom, custom being another nature, makes it as ordinary to men as to eat and drink. But if any of us have spent the flower of our youth in vice and vanity; Let the fruit of our age only savour of vertue. Indeed an old man of youthful behaviour, is more ridiculous than a wanton toying young man: Let every man then (especially old men) put their houses in order and prepare for Death: when Death is between their teeth, it is too late to provide remedies for the Terrours thereof.

A MEMENTO

CHURCH A



A
MEMENTO
TO
Young and Old.

Sermon I.

Ecclesiastes 12. verse 1.

Remember now thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth, while the evil daies come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

CHAP. I.

THe wise man having first run through the vanities of Life by his own bitter experience, now also hath taken a review of them (as it seemeth) with a penitent heart, and an amazed spirit; and drawing towards a Conclusion of this
B work

work, as a principle Master of the assemblies, desireth to leave one naile driven to the head, and well fixed in the hard heart of the younger sort; who are so possessed with those vanities of mind, which he had all this while laboured to purge, that they think themselves priviledged in youthful wantonness; and conceive that all restraints of their unbridled Lust, are but the froward or envious cavills of discontented old Age, or sullen Melancholy. Therefore it was expedient, that this prejudice, whereby they hurt none so much as themselves, should be removed by a contrary Exhortation; strongly enforced by a Pen-man beyond exception, a man of greatest sufficiency every way among the Sons of Adam, excepting that only *Immanuel*. But let them not think, that the force of this exhortation is dead with the writer, or worn out of date with age; but let them know for a certainty, that a greater than *Solomon* is here, that the Spirit of Truth, who liveth for ever, breatheth most Manifestly in this holy Text, who must be heard and obeyed by all that would not be found to fight against God: Let every one then, whose ears God hath opened, hear what the Spirit speaketh unto the Church in this place, and especially to the younger sort within the Church. *Remember*

ber now thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth, &c.

In which words we have first, an Exhortation, and then an enforcement of it, pressed and amplified at large in many verses following.

In the Exhortation } 1. *The Duty, what,* { all laid down
 } 2. *The Object, whom,* { in words of
 } 3. *The Time, when.* { special weight
there is,

1. The word [*Remember*] 1. implyeth much danger of, and inclination to forgetfulness. 2. It includeth Heart as well as Head, Affection as well as Memory.

2. The second thing, *The Object* [*Thy Creatour,*] a Word, that addeth much force to the Exhortation: Taken either absolutely, as implying the Creatour of all things, whom all Creatures, at all times, must glorify in their kinds, or with special relation to those, to who the Exhortation is more particularly directed: [*Thy Creatour.*] Remember him whom Created Thee, and hath right to thy whole Self, thy whole Life, and especially, to the best of thy Life and Strength.

3. The Third thus, *In the daies of thy youth.* *In the daies,* rather than years; for they are but a few *May-daies*, soon gone and vanished

4 *A Memento to Young and Old.*

[*of thy youth.*] The word in the Original, is derived from a word which signifies to chuse, and thence issueth a word signifying, a young man: and thence again, this in the Text signifying, Youth; both shewing, that younger men are the choycest of men, or should be so; and that youth is the principal and choicest part of our Life: So some render these words, [*In the daies of thy youth,*] in the daies of thy choyce.

The sence therefore, ye may take in these few words. O ye young men, who are of all others exceeding apt to forget him, of whom you ought to be most mindful: Let me perswade you, to know, to love, to delight in, to fear, to remember, to cleave unto, and obey, even in the best of your time and strength, your young vigourous and flourishing daies: Him, who is the great Creatour of all things: Him, who gave you in particular, that breath which is in your nostrills: Him, who gave you this heart, this strength, these Spirits, this lively temper of youth: Him, in whom you live, move, and have your being.

CHAP. II.

THese things being briefly and plainly opened, the observations which I shall make, I shall refer to two heads.

- Observ.* 1. That young men are especially apt to forget their Creatour.
2. That young men ought especially to remember their Creatour.

The first of these is certainly implied; the second plainly expressed in the words of the Text.

Of the first; the wise man seemeth of purpose, to have deferred this *Memento* until the latter end of his discourse, as knowing how apt the younger sort are to fail in this art of memory, concerning the best things; and hoping that of all others, a speech of farewell, would make some notable impression.

In this point I will shew. 1. Wherein this forgetfulness consisteth. 2. I will prove it to be, especially incident to youth. 3. I will shew the reasons or causes of it.

I. Now for the first, that I may shew wherein forgetfulness consisteth; both reason and our own experience in the working of the powers of our Souls, shew us, That memory is properly seated in the brain; and there-

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fore that forgetfulness, is a kind of emptiness in the same place. But we must attend to those Idioms of the Holy Ghost, who by reason of that, near knitting of all the faculties of the Soul in one single root of a Spiritual and Intellectual Being, doth promiscuously translate the name of the one to the other, and oftentimes include all in one. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* (saith our Saviour) *with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, &c.* *Math. 22. 37.* Why? All the powers of the Soul are not love: There is knowledge, memory, imagination, will, fear, joy, sorrow, hatred, courage, &c. which are all distinguished both in their Beings, and Effects from Love. But He, in whom all the Treasures of Wisdom were hid, knew well, that when the heart by love did truly close with God, and cleave unto him, it could not leave any of its affections behind it, but all must be given up unto him.

The Lord complaineth, *Isa. 1. 3.* *Israel doth not know, my people do not consider.* Ignorance was not the only sin, whereof the Lord held them guilty: but in this was included, as well want of love, of fear, of delight in God, as of knowledge of him. Not to go too far about; This forgetfulness which now we have in hand, you shall find to have the same

same force in the Scripture. *Psal. 137. If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right-hand forget her cunning. ver. 6. If I do not remember thee, let my Tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, &c.* The course of the words shew manifestly, that it was not simply to remember this City and Temple which he undertook, but to be deeply affected with its calamity; for he preferred *Jerusalem* above his chiefest joy.

But most plainly doth *Moses* expound this word unto us, *Deut. 8. ver. 11. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day.* Where to forget, is as well not to embrace in affection, and not to observe in practice, as not to keep in memory. Many other examples we have of like nature, in *Psal. 119.* besides many other Texts of Scripture. So that in a word, Forgetfulness of God, is a withdrawing, declining, and turning aside of the Heart and Soul from God, upon Earthly things, manifested in a course of neglecting God's Service and his Commandments, and running after the vanities of this life.

CHAP. III.

II. **N**OW that this is especially incident to the younger sort, I with the lamentable experience of all times, and of this especially, did not too much ease me of the labour in proving; yet something must be said for it according to promise. The wise man in setting forth the impudency of a graceless Strumpet, sheweth, that young men are especially apt to forget God, and to be ensnared by her, *Prov. 7.6,7. At the window of my house I looked through my casement, and behold among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house, &c.* These are the men, who in the pride of their youth, and heat of their Blood, value their own wits at an high rate, and think themselves the wisest in the Countrey, despise the dulness of elder years, and more settled spirits; as if wisdom were born, and should dye with them: Yet here ye may see, how the wisest of men doth censure them for fools, simple ones, void of understanding; men especially forgetful of God, of his Word, and Will: such a one was seen going toward the house of a strange Woman,
 toward

toward a Whore-house : and such are some Ale-houses frequented so much by young men ; for I know none so fit to keep a Stews, as those who professedly without regard of Magistracy, Ministry, Credit, &c. do keep common shops for Drunkenness. But mark the Wisdom of our young man, 21. 22, 23. *With much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him : he goeth after her straight way, as an Oxe goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks : till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not, that it is for his life.* She filled his head with her prateing and enticeing speeches, and put better things out of his mind : She caused him to forget God, and cast his fear behind his back, so she carried him captive in the bonds of lust, and driveth him as an Oxe to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks, &c. So the wise man in *Eccles. 11. 9.* Sheweth, the folly and forgetfulness of young men, where by way of Irony, and in an holy scorn, he biddeth them do that which they will do, though never so much forbidden and threatned. *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the daies of thy youth.*]put God the Judge of all the World out of thy thoughts,

thoughts, lay aside all sad remembrance of the last Judgment, let none of these Melancholick passions any whit interrupt thy youthful delights; *walk in the waies of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.*] Follow thy lusts, and senses like the bruit beasts, and forget all that will follow, even as if thy Soul should vanish away in the ayr at the hour of thy Death, like the breath of a Beast. without hope of Joy, or fear of Vengeance in another World. By this ironical concession he giveth us an excellent description of the brutish and sensual forgetfulness of the younger sort, minding present things with the full bent of their Souls, and never seriously looking towards the things that are above. But what is the issue? *but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to Judgment]*

Even these things which thou makest nothing off, as pardonable Errours of youth, shall be scanned in the impartial judgement of God, and he will bring thee to Judgment for them all.

CHAP. IV.

III. **I**N the next place I am to shew the causes of this forgetfulness in the younger sort, and here it were but an idle piece of Philosophy

Philosophy to ascribe it to the natural moisture and fluid temper of their brains, whereby the impressions of things are presently dissolved, like letters written in the water. No; this forgetfulness is as well in the heart as in the brain, and requireth a further search into it's causes.

1. In the first place then, one special cause is, a fleshly confidence in the natural strength of body, and hope of long life. They look at Death as a thing afar off, even out of sight; and therefore suffer not the apprehension of it to make any such impression upon them, as in any degree to lessen that carnal, sensual content, which they take in the glut of earthly Vanities. The blind Worldling, when his barnes were full, blessed himself in his own conceited happiness; *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years.* But these persons think they have the advantage of him; for whereas his Soul that night was to be taken from his goods; they think they have life in store for many years, and so with the unfaithful servant conclude, that their Master will defer his coming, and they may safely delay their Repentance, and put him out of their remembrance. As *Gaal*, and the men of *Shechem*, could eat and drink, and curse *Abimelech*, because they thought he was

was not near them, though he was nearer than they were aware: so the younger sort can satisfy their lusts, and please themselves, and do what they will, scorning all admonitions or threatnings of Death; because they think it not neer unto them: Whereas perhaps Death (as the punishment of Sin) lyeth at their door, and will be found to have way-laid them in the midst of their vanities; and to cut them off in the midst of their strength and sins. Strength, Health, abundance of Spirits, freedom from aches, pains, and bodily distempers, do put Death out of their thoughts, and they will leave crooked and way-ward old age to vex it self with pensive remembrances of the Grave.

2. The lively vigour of youth, filleth them with a kind of carnal self-content, and maketh them please themselves in themselves, and so to feel no need they have of happiness, and of delighting themselves in the Lord; and therefore to neglect and forget their Creatour. Oh they think they are absolute men, they are as they desire to be, and cannot wish to be better; their blood hath free passage in their veins, their Spirits in their Arteries without obstructions, they are lively, amiable, merry, jovial, free from wants, fears, sorrows, troubles: and (as *Job* describeth the young gallant)

gallant) *His Breasts are full of milk, and his Bones are moistned with marrow: thy are wholly at ease and quiet, and therefore God is not in all their thoughts.*

3. This lusty youthful temper makes them every way more sensible, and capable of earthly delights, and pleasures, and so more apt to forget their Creatour and his service. Old *Barzillai* knew not what to do at Court, *2 Sam. 19. 35. I am this day Fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant (saith he to King David) Taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burthen unto my Lord the King?* Old Age is not sensible, nor capable of many delights, which younger persons take in with greediness. No carnal pleasure but it suiteth with their dispositions, they have a temper fitted to all fleshly delights, and so can please their wanton appetites with variety of dishes; that is, their diverse lusts with variety of fleshly delights, and in this case, no wonder though they forget their Creatour, when by reason of the constitution of their bodies peculiar to that age, they can so many wayes please themselves in the Creature. Men naturally forget God, untill they need him: But the young

young man in his prime, finding so much below in the earth, which ministreth matter of contentment to him, apprehendeth no present need of him that made him, and so mindeth him not, unless the Lord open his eyes, and cause him to see the emptiness and vanity of these things, and his own miserable folly in resting his Soul upon them.

4. A Fourth cause is, want of experience in the uncertain condition of earthly things. Young Men are in the Spring of their lives and pleasures, and know not yet what a Winter meaneth. They have not yet (for the most part) been beaten off from their pleasing folly by any notable change of estate; they know not what sorrow meaneth, and so they securely promise themselves a continuance of this seeming happiness, and forget God; as not perceiving any special need of him. They hope to speed as well as they have done, and so long they care not. Those crosses which sometime befall the younger sort, may for the present make them exceeding passionate, but they are soon vanished, and no print of their foot-steps remaineth behind them; their delights are after a while, never awhit embittered by them: and thus forgetting their crosses, they become forgetful of their God, and that account which must be rendred to him: you
see

see how easie it is for youth, to spin a snare wherein to entangle it self, even out of its own bowels,

CHAP. V.

But lest this should not hold them fast enough, *Satan* hath other instruments to help twist the threds; many wicked wretches there are in the world, who help them forward in their misery.

1. Want of care, and conscience in Parents, not obeying the charge of the Apostle, which is to *bring up their Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Ephes. 6. 4. Not imitating the Father of the Faithful in the fruits of his Faith, Gen. 18. 19. *In commanding their Children, and household after them, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do Judgment and Justice*: Not taking advice of *Solomon*, who counselleth them to teach their Children in the trade wherein they should go, and giveth an hopeful promise for encouragement, *That they will not depart from it when they are old*, Prov. 22, 6. Not looking with a single eye, at the glory of God, nor with a tender eye, on the poor souls of their Children; to whom deriving misery from their own Loyns, they take no care to cure them of it.

2. The evil examples which even Parents themselves

themselves give unto their Children, many of them in their ripeſt, yea in their rotten years, returning to the ſins of youth, or (at leaſt) glorying in them; even in the hearing of their Children. How many young men are Drunkards, Swearers, Unclean Perſons, Scoffers at Holineſs, Contemners of the Word even by Succeſſion and Inheritance? The Son heareth his Father Swear, he heareth him uſe filthy communication; he ſeeth the old Beaſt come home Drunken, and who can wonder, though he forgeth his Creatour, whom he hath not ſeen, whiles he findeth ſuch wickedneſs in his Father whom he daily ſeeth? or if they ſcorn ſuch boys-play, yet many times by that aged Sin of Covetouſneſs, they ſhewing themſelves dead-hearted towards God, cold, careleſs in his ſervices, not feelingly and zealouſly mindful of his glory, teach their Children to forget him that made them, though they differ in thoſe things, which they embrace. The very example of a covetous Father, may make a Son riotous, by teaching him to fall off from God; and then his heart will cleave to that which is moſt ſuitable to it. The Father's example ſetteth him out of the right way; and his own peculiar luſts, and diſtemper'd paſſions carrying him in ſuch a by-path, as beſt ſiteth his own
foot;

foot ; whereas, many times the Father is displeased, not because it is a wrong way, but because it is not his own ; not because it is contrary to the wayes of God, but because it crosseth his wayes : not because it is more sinful, but more chargeable than his own course, which is most pleasing to him.

3. The neglect of Religious duties in the Fathers Family, is the ready way to make the Son unmindful of him that made him. When Christ hath no Church, but Mammon hath his Chappel in the house ; when there is no serious remembrance of God from one end of the year to the other in effectual prayers, in constant reading of the Word, in whetting it on (as *Moses* speaketh) by repetitions, pious and seasonable admonitions, when the Lord hath no entertainment there, it is no marvel to find the younger sort forgetful of God.

CHAP. 6.

BUT besides these faults in Parents, many others will help to build up Satans Kingdom, upon the ruines of the younger sort, As,

1. Their own equalls in years, by whom they shall be drawn into the same excess of riot, which the others have followed. For as Satan himself being fallen, could not endure

dure to lye alone, but sought companions in
 wickedness and wretchedness, so he infilleth
 the same disposition into those who are caught
 in his nets. These therefore partly by hel-
 lish scoffs at those, who even out of ingenu-
 ity, or good education, loath their courses at
 the first; partly by pleasing insinuations,
 smooth language, especially by that plausible
 name of good fellow-ship, wherewith the Fa-
 ther of lies hath sought to grace one of his
 own occupations, do hale others with them
 in the same wayes of Destruction; and be-
 ing joyned together in a wretched society, by
 lewd and lustful songs, scurril jests, abusive
 speeches, loud laughter; ruffian-like out-
 facing better and wiser men than them-
 selves, they encourage each others, they har-
 den their hearts, they drown the voice of
 Conscience, they contemn the Word of God
 they fight against Heaven with prophane and
 horrible Oathes, and (as it were) seal all
 their leagues of pretended good-fellow-ship
 even with a resolved ἀρνεία, a decreed for-
 getfulness of God, and so of godliness, of
 Death and of Judgment to come, wherewith
 St. Paul made even his *Heathen* Judge to
 shake, as he sate upon the Bench.

2. Secondly, and especially, a company of
 grounded Drunkards, that are up and down

the Countrey, old Sotts that are settled upon their lees, who know almost every corner in every common or blind Ale-house, as well as the rooms in their own houses and never think themselves so well at home, as in a Tap-house. Oh, how do these work about to poyson the youth of our age, and to make them (like themselves) the children of hell! who by the assistance of the Devil abuse their old crafty pates, to ensnare young heedless Souls, and to bring in Captives to the Prince of Darkness. Doth not the same doom belong unto these, which was due to *Elymas* the Sorcerer, for seeking to turn away the deputy from the truth? to whom *St. Paul* himself used this language, *Thou Child of the Devil, and enemy of all goodness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the straight ways of the Lord?* Do not these by the enchantment of their fawning tongues bewitch green years, and cast them into a dead sleep of security and forgetfulness of God? Oh that miserable experience did not prove my words too mild! which yet some, that in their own causes can be merciless, perhaps will accuse me of too much roughness. But who can forbear, when he seeth them to be the very Emis-saries of Hell, and (as I may so speak) *Ipsi-ns ebrietatis loquaces*, the very Panders or

Bawds for Drunkenness, an inferiour sort of Tempters or Devils, Satan's under-Officers, and Factors for the Land of Darknes, who are not content to go to Hell without a Troop at their heels, as if it were not sufficient for them to be guilty of destroying their own Souls, unless they have many more Murthers of the same kind, to be put into the same Indictment. I tell you, who soever ye are, your society is more to be shunned, than his that hath a Plague-sore upon his body ; ye are to be poynted at, and accounted by all that know you, as the very Mothes that fret the newest and the strongest Cloth, *Juventus pestes* The very bane of youth, and the corrupters of the next age, which shall then arise, when your bodies are rotten under ground : yea, the sins which you now set in a course, may stream down unto the end of the World, whilst they that are infected by you, shall infect others, and so again successively ; so that by this means ye may be guilty of those sins which shall be committed many hundred years hence, if the World so long continue.

3. Those Ale-house-keepers, who give way to all manner of excess in their houses whose *Motto* may be *Lucri bonus odor*, &c. In whose ears Swearing is good Musick

in whose eyes beastly vomits are a pleasing spectacle, and the Lords day, a fit time for tipling and swilling with greediness, so that they may take mony, feed higher, go braver, and look bigger than men of more worth, and better employment: These have their trains to draw on the younger sort, who know not that their houses go down to the chambers of Death.

4 Those Magistrates and Officers cannot by any means be excused, under whom these youthful sins grow so fast, whiles they hold the Sword (that is put in to their hands) rusting in the sheath, where is the Spirit and courage that should be in these, that are the very *Triarii* in the armies of the Lord of Hosts, the stoutest and choicest Soldiers? Are ye afraid of those who are but *Lixæ & calones*, Scullions and Tapsters under Satans Banner? should such Men as ye fly or fear, and not dare to face those, who at the most are but *Milites levis armatura*, Souldiers lightly armed, as I may so speak? What can they do against a Justice of the Peace, a Constable, or an Head-borough, more than let flye their Arrows, even bitter words? I know not what policy is in this connivance, unless it be to leave the envy and burthen upon us of the Ministry, whiles we alone fight against these things

things with the Sword of the Spirit. But if ye refuse utterly to joyne with us in bearing your part of the burthen, you must not look to share in the reward. I desire above all, that you would let the honour of God prevail with you, your Charge, your Oathes; but if these things move not, take heed lest the Lord repay you in your own Coyn; and whiles you tender not the Glory of God, nor the good of the younger sort in general by restraining their licentious meetings, by informing against, or punishing those that entertain them, he may justly leave your own Children to be thus corrupted, or at least your Childrens Children of the third or fourth Generation. The Lord give you zeal and courage, that you may not have your portion without among the fearful.

CHAP. VII.

Use. **L**et me speak a few words to you that are of the younger sort. Whensoever you see a young Man or Maid carried to their graves, that spectacle of Mortality forbids you to be forgetful of your Creatour in any Age or part of your Life. Look upon that Coffin that holdeth a body young, and very lately strong in constitution, and let it be unto thee, O young Man, a use of instruction, not to trust to long life in the heat
of

of thy youth, or the best of thy strength; not to please thy self in a self-content arising out of thine own form, youthful, lively temper, not to magnify thine happiness, in regard of a seeming advantage which thou thinkest thou hast of old age, in being more capable of carnal delights than it; that thou art able to take in more of the Devils baits, which he never casteth forth without an hook. Let it teach thee not to hearken to the enticements of Sinners, old or young, nor to think that house of all others the best adorned, that hath a Sign-post.

Let it reprove thy great forgetfulness of thy Creatour, in the daies of thy youth; Let it strike a deep apprehension into thine heart of the necessity of present repentance without all delay; and let this so work upon thee, and stick by thee, that no potts may wash it off, nor no loud Ale-house clamours may drown the voice of thy Conscience, when it shall bring this to thy remembrance. Oh let not Satan bewitch thee! Weart thou as certain of a long life, as thou art uncertain, yet canst thou not possible be certain of the grace of Repentance, which is a rare gift; and (I am perswaded) seldom bestowed in decrepit years, where it hath been rejected in the more able age; especially by such, as

all their time have lived under a faithful and convincing Ministry. Doth the Apostle say, That the *Gentiles* were given up to a reprobate sence, because they did withhold the truth in unrighteousness, going on in those unrighteous courses, which the Light of Truth Manifested to them by the works of Creation, did discover and Condemn? How much more mayst thou tremble at this dreadful Judgment, who continuest in the pride of thy youth to sin with greediness, against that Light of the Word, which shineth unto thee far more brightly, than that twilight of Nature. The Lord make you wise unto Salvation, and suffer you not with blind eyes, and obstinate Spirits, to run upon your own Destruction, forgetting him that made you; putting off the remembrance of your latter end, passing on in a dead sleep of present impenitency, and a false dream of future Repentance, until the very flashes of Hell-fire are set on you: from which the Lord preserve you, by timely awaking of your Consciences, through his Word and Grace, that ye may not sleep the sleep of everlasting Death.

S E R M O N. II.

Eccles. 12. 1.

Remember now thy Creatour, &c.

C H A P. I.

HAVING spoken of the former point, I proceed unto the Second.

Observ. That young men ought especially, to *Remember their Creatour in the daies of their youth.* What it is to remember, (in the language of the holy Ghost) you may gather by that which I spake of the contrary, in opening the former point; where I shewed you, That this remembrance is not only of the brain, but of the heart, together with the head, implying affections as well as memory, and such as are powerful, Manifesting themselves in answerable Practices. So that, as to forget God, is a with-drawing, declining, and turning the heart aside from God; so to remember God, is a cleaving of the heart to him in love, whereby all the Powers of the Soul are given up to him, waiting upon his Will in an holy attendance upon the directions of his Word, readily practising whatsoever he commandeth, and carefully shunning whatsoever he forbideth. We read

Num.

Num. 15. 38, 39, 40. That the Lord would have the people of *Israel* to have fringes on their Garments, that they might remember his Commandments: but not barely to keep them in their memories, but (saith he) *That ye may remember, and do all my Commandments, and be holy unto your God.* An effectual remembrance that should work upon the affections, and make them holy, that should shape them out an holy course of Life, and make them do all that the Lord had Commanded. This doth the Scripture in special manner require of young men. *Psal. 119. 9. Where-withal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy Word.*

CHAP. II.

THIS Point may be made more plain by Reasons.

Reason 1. The former Point shall be a Reason of this: Young Men are especially apt to forget their Maker; and therefore, young Men ought to be especially careful to remember him. The greater defect there is in any, the greater care is required in supplying that defect. The stronger inclination there is to any sin, the greater watchfulness there ought to be in resisting and subduing that sin. The more unapt and sluggish we are

are towards any duty, the more careful should we be to quicken and encourage our selves to that duty. The weakest parts of a City have special need of guarding. Men that have but weak memories, and have much dealings in the World, are so much the more careful to use their Pens, and commit such things to books and memorials; with which, if they should trust their memories, they would deceive them. So especially in heavenly things; the more apt young Men are to forget their Creatour, the more careful should they be to remember their Maker, because their affections are violent; because they are apt to be blinded with a fleshly confidence in youth and strength of body: because they are apt to doate with a carnal complacency upon the natural vigour of their youthful temper; because they are more capable of carnal pleasures, than the elder sort: because there are so many snares laid for them, above others; by all which means, they are apt to lose the best and happiest use of their memories, and to live in a sensual forgetfulness of, and neglect of their God, and Creatour: therefore, should they with a double care and watchfulness, endeavour to stir up their hearts to a conscionable, and affectionate remembrance of their Maker.

2. We may also gather a reason from the second word in my Text.

[*Now*] *Remember now* &c. which noteth a special excellency of this time above others. As if he had said; *Now* is the chief time wherein thou mayst do God best Service. So then young men ought especially, to remember their Creatour, because, *Now* in their young daies, is the chiefeft and choycest time, wherein they may glorifie their God, and do him acceptable Service. *Remember now*, while sin is but budding, whiles corruptions are but twiggs, while lust is but conceiving; while passion and anger is but a green wound, not festered and turned into a fetled and cankered malice, and revengeful disposition. *Now*, whiles thy senses are quick, thy spirits lively, thy temper healthy, thy body strong; while thy blood is warm, and every part is fit for that imployment, for which it was ordained. *Now*, shew thy self mindful of thy Creatour, careful of his service, respectful of his Glory. *Now*, thou canst do something for him, *Now*, is the time wherein thou art able, and therefore *Now* especially thou must remember him.

3. This word [*Now*] may seem to imply somewhat more, *viz.* That this which is here required must be done, now or never. True

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it is, some few may be converted in their elder years, who in their youth, were forgetful of their Maker; but ye must observe, that here the Lord requireth of every one, that he should give up the strength, the morning, the freshest and principal part of his life unto him, and his service. *Now*, this can never be done but in youth; and he that spendeth his youth in sin and impenitency, can never perform this work; he can never give up his strength, and the best of his time to God. The Lord saith, *Remember ye keep holy the Sabbath day*; this should be presently done without delay; but yet, some who have been careless prophaners of the Lords day, have afterwards been conscionable observers of it. But when the Lord saith, *Remember your Creatour in youth*, this cannot be done but in youth. He that spendeth his youth in impenitency and ungodliness, can never afterwards give up his youth, and the strength thereof unto God. Under the Law, the Lord required the best of the Flock for Sacrifice; *Now*, he that should sell or kill all the best, and leave none but the old, the starveling, the blind, the lame, &c. That man could never obey the Commandment; so when the Lord biddeth us to remember to give up our youth to him; if we spend this and our strength

strength in sin, we can never obey this Commandment, for that time and strength is gone, and our impotent time, crazy, drowsy old age is left.

4. From this Word [*Creator*] God made all things for his glory, and the more excellent any Creature is, either in regard of its specifical nature or kind, or in regard of its particular qualities and excellencies, the more is it tyed to glorify God that made it such. So among all earthly Creatures, Man being made of the most excellent nature, is most straitly tyed to glorify God the *Creator*. And among Men, such as are in their youth and strength, being endowed with the most excellent abilities, ought more especially to remember him.

5. Consider these Words, [*Thy Creator*] God is the *Creator* of young Men, as young Men. He did not only give thee the being of a Man, but the years, the life, the health, the strength, the vigour of a young Man. He is the Author of thy youth, the *Creator* of thy strength, he is thy *Creator* in special; he hath now *Created* that strength, and ability in thee, which he hath not yet *Created* in Children, that which he hath taken from old Men. Thou hast that work of his now wrought upon, and shewing it self in thee, which is not
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in others ; and therefore, *Remember thy Creator*, that hath Created that hot Blood, that warmeth thy heart, that quickness of apprehension, and those lively Spirits that are within thee.

6. Consider these Words [*In the daies of thy youth,*] daies and not years, daies and not nights. Thy youth is but a few *May-daies*, it will presently be gone ; and therefore in those few daies, that short time, thou shouldst give up thy self to thy *Creator*. *Could not ye Watch with me one hour ?* a just reproof of our Saviour to his sleepy Disciples. *Could ye not afford me a few daies ?* a just reproof of all silly souls, who are not wise unto Salvation, and think their youth too good, too much to be given up to God. It is not three hundred years that the Lord asketh at thy hands, as at *Henoch's* ; nor Nine hundred and upwards, as he required of other *Patriarches*, but a few daies of youth. *Daies*, and not *Nights*.] The times of youth, consist of *Daies* ; then is the Sun-shine, the Nights follow, dark times of old age ; aches, weakness, sickness, sleepiness. Now because these are *Daies*, they must be given up to God, who is *Light* ; and not to the Devil, who is the Prince of *Darkness* : nor to sins, which are works of *Darkness*. This is gross folly to give the
Daies

Days of youth to Satan, and to leave the dimme evening of our old declining age to God; to give the good, the best daies to Satan, and the evil daies (as they are called afterwards) yea the worst to God.

CHAP. III.

Vse. I. **T**HIS sheweth the great folly of young Men, who think (of all others in a Congregation) that they have least reason to give any special heed, and yield obedience unto the Word Preached. Old Men (they think) had need to look about them, they smell of the Winding-sheet, the Grave groaneth for them, an earthy cold benumeth their Limbs, the beginnings of death are already upon them, and have taken deep possession of them: but as for themselves, they are full of Life, and feel no messengers of Death: Life aboundeth in their Blood, in their Spirits, it is strongly seated in their Bones, it beateth in their pulses, it looketh out at their eyes, and shineth in their faces: there is no sign, no shew of Death. Alas, poor souls! Death doth not alwayes give any long time of warning, it maketh many sudden surprizals, as well as tedious and lingering seiges. It hangeth up young *Abjalom* invironed with his Warlike troops; it sheddeth

eth young *Amnon's* blood in the midst of his Cups; while *Jobs* Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest Brothers house, there came a great wind from the Wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and fell upon the young Men, and they dyed, *Job* 1. 18, 19. In one night Death slayeth the Sons and Heirs of *Pharaoh*, and of all the *Egyptians*; so that there was scarce one house, where there was not one young Man dead.

How often hath the supream Lord of Life and Death taught us by evident examples, that no age is priviledged, no years are exempted; that the youngest cannot promise himself another year, another day, or hour? ye that sit here old and young, who knoweth when, or where the next blow will light? Sin hath perverted the order of Nature, and put it out of course; and therefore ye must not look, that the same order should be kept in passing out, which was in coming into the World; and that those who came first, should alwaies leave those behind them, which were born after them. The Son dyeth before the Father, the Nephew before the Grand-father, the Young before the Old, the Heir before him that is in possession. Sin hath let in Death into the World, and that cometh in as an

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Enemy

Enemy, not upon parly and conditions, but as a Conqueror by a forcible entry, and sacketh this City of the World, and maketh no difference of Sex or Age, but killeth and striketh on the right hand, and on the left, It hearkneth to no such plea: There is an elder man, There is a Woman that was old when I was a Child; let me alone, I am content to yield when mine Auntients are gone before me: No, if I will that he carry, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Some daies in the year, are not near so long as some others. Some mens lives will but reach the middle of some others, their Sun setteth at noon, and the night is come upon them before they have begun their daies work. Therefore let young men learn wisdom from the wise man; yea, from the Spirit speaking in this Text, *Remembering their Creatour in the daies of their Youth.* And thinke thou, O young Man! whatsoever thou hearest, concerning the wayes of God; thinke that whatsoever remembrances, are delivered from the Word, to put thee in mind of the *Creatour*, that they concern thee in especial. there were none but young Men in a Parish that place should have special need of the Word of God. If there were no gray-heads in a Congregation, yet there is need of spe

cial Exhortations from the Word, to mind
such of their *Creator*. If thou hearest of
present Repentance, conceive that it is spo-
ken to thee. If the danger of continuing
in sin, and delaying conversion be set forth
in the Ministry of the Word, know that this
belongeth to thee in special manner, who art
in the daies of thy youth. If thou hearest
the charge of our Saviour, *Watch therefore,*
lest at any time your hearts be overcome with
Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and the cares of
this life, and that day come upon you una-
wares, Luk. 21. 34. Know, that this is spo-
ken unto thee, and that thou in thy youth,
must not at any time give way to these
things; no, not when friends meet, nor when
thou art urged, and haled to it. When Solo-
mon saith, *My Son, when sinners entice thee,*
consent thou not Prov. 1. 10. Think that he
speaketh to thee. Whom doth the Com-
pellation [*My Son*] better besit than the
young Man? when St. Paul saith, *God hath*
not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness;
that every one of us should possess his vessel in
sanctification and in honour, not in the lust of
Concupiscence, &c. 1. These 4. 4, 5. Believe
it, that he speaketh unto thee, who art in thy
youth; wherein he speaketh most plainly.
2 Tim. 2. 22. *Fly also youthful Lusts.*

CHAP. IV.

Use 2. **T**His also sheweth another notable Error of young Men, who think they may freely take that liberty which others may not, and walk more at large, than those of elder years. Ye see the holy Ghost crosses this conceit, and calleth upon young Men more especially, to *Remember their Creation*. Know therefore, That when our Saviour saith *Enter in at the strait Gate*, He speaketh unto you that are young, and requireth the of you in your youth as well as any other. He directeth both old and young to come this way to Heaven; for *broad is the way, and wide is the Gate that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it*, Mat. 7. 13. Our Saviour chargeth all to leave the broad way, that will not run into Destruction; and therefore for young Men to think, that they may walk at large, and follow their Lusts, is to imagine, that they have liberty, to run into Damnation. There is but one way, (and that is a narrow one) but one Gate, (and that is a strait one) that leadeth unto Life; and they that would live for ever, must enter into Life by this strait Gate.

Gate, and narrow way, whether young or old. If ye would know what allowance ye have in this kind, it is no more than that which *Solomon* giveth in *Eccles. 11. 9. Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the daies of thy youth.* Take thy pleasure; but so, that thou make sure account for all these vanities and licentiousness of youth, to give a most strict account at the day of Judgment. If thou wilt tittle, if thou wilt swear, if thou wilt idle away thy time, &c. know for a certain, that God will bring thee to Judgment for all these things.

Was it not to a young Man that our Saviour spake, when he said, *Go and sell all that thou hast, give to the poor, and follow me?* *Mat. 19. 21, 22.* Here was a narrow way, and yet this was required of a young Man, if he would be saved. And though he were young, yet could he get no release of our Saviour, but he goeth away with a sad and sorrowful heart. The like in effect, saith our Saviour to every young Man; sell all that thou hast: do away thy Lusts, put away thy Drunkenness, cast off Lying, Swearing, Idleness, Pride, Vanities, and follow me. The way of Christ is the strictest way, the narrowest path that ever Man went. Now Christ will have young Men follow him, and keep
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their feet in the narrow way which he hath gone before, and tread in his steps. I hope none will be so Blasphemous, as to say, that Christ did take this licentious course, which young Men think they may take. Well then! if thou wilt enter into life, thou must follow him, and go in that narrow path wherein he walked. It is to be observed, that Christ was young, and dyed young; therefore if ye that are young, look for Salvation by him, ye must follow him, in those waies of his youth. All those good works, all that holiness, whereby he fulfilled all righteousness, these were the praesises of his youth; if then ye will have him for your Saviour, who walked thus in his youth, ye must follow him in your youth. Christ went about doing good, and thinkest thou, that thou maist go about doing evil, that thou maist run about hunting after idle meetings, and ill company because thou art young, and in the flower of thy youth? No, Christ was young, when he went about doing good, *Act. 10. 38.* And therefore if thou takest liberty to go about doing evil, because thou art young, thou art no Disciple of Christ.

CHAP. V.

Use 3. **L** Et me exhort you that are young, That ye would effectually lay to heart these words of the holy-Ghost. *Remember now thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth.*] Oh that you would now enter into a Covenant with the Lord, and bind your selves resolvedly to seek your Creatour! To you that are young the Spirit of God here speaketh: Oh take heed of despising him that speaketh from heaven, because of your youth; but hear him so much the rather, because he speaks to young Men, and for this end let me urge you with some Motives.

1. Consider, what wrong it is to God, to give *Satan* the best of thy time? Under the Law, the first-Fruits were to be given to God. *Levit. 23. 10. - 14.* And they might eat no bread until the Lord had the first-Fruits offered unto him. So that he who should presume to eat any of his Corn, before the Lord had his portion, even a sheaf of the first-fruits, he was no better than a Sacrilegious intruder upon the Lord's Possession. So the Lord requireth of thee, O young Man! the first-Fruits of thy Life, even thy youth and strength; and if thou dost not offer and consecrate thy young years to

the Lord, thou dealest Sacrilegiously, thou dost alienate the Lord's Portion; thou deliverest Possession unto *Satan*, of that which God hath committed to thy trust, to reserve wholly for him; like some unfaithful Tenant, yielding up the possession to him that hath but a pretended Title, to the prejudice of the right owner. Oh do not give the first-Fruits unto the Devil! and think that God will be pleased with the Gleanings, the refuse, and scattered ears, the dreggs of old age, *Offer it now to thy Prince*, see if he will accept thee, *Malac. i. 8.* As if he has said; Serve thy Princes Enemy in thy youth and strength, and then come to the Court in thine old age, limping with thy stilt, and crutches, and say, Mine old Master hath cast me off, and now I will serve thee; see then if ~~he~~ he will entertain thee. So it is in this case.

2. Consider that God loveth cheerfulness in his services; so many places of Scripture shew. *Rejoyce in the Lord, &c. I will raise the wayes of thy Commandments*; saith David, *Quicken me O Lord, &c.* Now youth is the most cheerful part of a mans Life, then the heart is in the liveliest temper, then the spirits are freshest, and quickest; and natural cheerfulness being Sanctified, is a furtherance of
of

of spiritual joy. The quickness of the natural temper (which is in youth most vigorous,) is a good servant to quickning grace. Think not, that God is best pleased with the lumpish old age, which many times is little more than a dead piece of Earth, with a little portion, a small remainder of life abiding in it. God is *the living God*, and he requireth *living Sacrifices*. Rom. 12. 1. Now thy youth hath more life in it than thine old age: There is (as it were) a closer union between the Soul and Body in youth. The Soul imparteth a more plentiful influence of Life unto the Body in youth, than in old age, by the quickness and plenty of the Spirits, which in youth are more abundant than in age. Give up therefore this most living part of thy life, thy young daies unto God; and not only that part of life which partaketh more of Death than of life; thine old decrepit and disabled age. *The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in a way of Righteousness*, Prov. 16. 31. [*Found,*] He doth not say, if it enter into the way of Righteousness, but if it be Found there. If a Man hath turned to God in his youth, and persevered in upright walking before him, until gray haire come upon him; that Man needeth no Crown of Gold to adorn his head, his hoary head is a
Crown

Crown of Glory to him. If under the Law a Man did burn the prime of his Beast in Sacrifice, it was accepted: yea, when it was almost consumed, even the remainders that were half burnt, did yield a sweet savour to the Lord: because the best was burnt also upon the Altar of the Lord. So let a Man consecrate the prime of his daies, his youth to the Lord; offer up this as a living Sacrifice, and then, even his worn old age, which is like a Sacrifice half burnt and spent, shall be exceeding sweet and pleasing to the Lord, because the best was given up unto him: whereas on the other side, should any of the Priests have burned a Sacrifice upon the Altar of *Baal*, and then when it was half burnt should have brought the gleanings and laid them upon the Altar of the Lord, this would have been a grievous abomination in the sight of the Lord. So in this case, &c. Oh then, *Remember thy Creatour in thy youth*, lest he forget or despise thee in thine age. Remember him in thy youth, that thy hoar head may be found in the way of Righteousness, and so may be a Crown of Glory, and not a Spectacle of Reproach and Contempt unto thee.

3. Consider especially, the unspeakable danger of Sin, confirmed and rooted with time; wrought and wreathed into the heart,
and

and clasped in the affections, by long custom in sin. Oh when sin hath been thirty or forty years in growing, and taking root, it cleaveth like the skin to the bones; like the Leprosy that was rooted in a wall, which could not be taken away, untill the wall were pulled down. That sin which is in growing the whole time of a Mans youth, during the best of his strength, it is even a wonder, if it doth not accompany that Man to his Death-bed; yea, to the Judgment-seat of God. I know, the mercy of God is infinite, and he calleth at the Eleventh hour: but I am persuaded, those are very few which are so called: and especially very few, (if any) of those who have had the means of Grace in their youth, and regarded them not. Oh this willful hardning of the heart is dreadful. This continuing in sin against knowledge; this with-holding the truth in unrighteousness, moveth the Lord to give men over to a Reprobate sence; *Rom. 1. 21, 24, 25, 28.* Into such a state, that he becometh incapable, unteachable; that neither blessings, nor crosses; neither the Rod, nor the Word; neither sickness, nor health; neither gray hairs, nor the approach of Death, can work him to to sound Conversion. Ah poor forsaken Soul! such a one may come to say
with

with *Saul*, *God hath forsaken me* ! A speech, that might rend a tender heart to hear it, I speak not this to bring you to despair, but to stir you up to speedy Repentance, that ye may prevent this desperate and woful condition.

CHAP. I.

IN the last place, let me speak a few words to Parents, and old People.

1. To Parents : Ye that are Parents, labour ye to season the very Child-hood of your Sons and Daughters with the true knowledg and fear of God ; pray over them daily, instruct, exhort, rebuke, and use all good means ; that the prime of their daies may be given up to God : Teach them to Remember their Creatour in their Childhood, that they may neither forget him in their youth, nor forsake him in their old age. I fear that most Parents among us, by neglecting their Duty herein ; are guilty of their Childrens Destruction.

2. To the Aged : Ye that are grown old, and have not remembred your Creatour in your younger daies, whose bones are full of the sins of your youth ; Oh know that your case is exceeding dangerous ! therefore bewaile your lives, whereby ye have so much dishonoured

dishonoured your Maker : humble and judge your selves in the bitterness of your Souls ; cry continually, and importunately in the ears of the Lord, that (if it be possible) the sins of your youth, and the long continued wickedness of your Lives, may be forgiven you, that the often resistance which ye have made against the spirit of God may be pardoned, if it be possible, that the frequent casting of the Word of God behind thy back may be forgiven. Oh how odious and contemptible is the hoary head, found in the way of wickedness, in a state of impenitency ? What is an old Drunkard, or Adulterer, a gray-headed Swearer, an old Coverous Worldling, an hoary headed impenitent person, but even a monster among Men ? What dost thou not yet remember thy Creatour ? not in old age, not at fifty, at sixty, or seventy years ? Oh wretched security ! Awake ! awake unto Righteousness, unto Repentance, ye old ones that sleep in sin, lest ye sleep the sleep of everlasting Death, and never behold the face of God in Righteousness !

SERMON III.

Eccles. 12. 1.

*Remember now thy Creatour in the daies
of thy Youth, &c.*

CHAP. I.

BESIDES what hath been already observed,
something yet may be further not-
ed, *Viz.*

Observ. That Grace and Holiness are
exceeding fit, and no way unseemly for the
younger sort. Man's Life hath in some re-
gards been compared to a Comedy, or Enter-
lude Acted upon the Theatre, or Sage of this
World; and the truth is, many a Mans life
is but a Play; and many in their courses do
but act other mens parts, not in sincerity ex-
press their own inward dispositions. And
therefore that *decorum*, which they suppose
may grace them in the eyes of Men, is the
thing they most of all affect and aim at. But
this is Man's misery, that his Eye is now not
single, nor can he rightly discern what be-
cometh him; so that many times he shunneth
those things as unseemly, which would be his
greatest ornaments, and goeth about to deck
himself with such things as do but lay open
his

his nakedness, and discover his shame. The Apostle saith, that long hair (which is a Womans ornament,) is a Man's shame. *If a man wear long hair, it is folly and shame to him,* 1 Cor. 11. And yet many men account this a special ornament; whereas indeed, it doth as ill become them, as a Distaff doth; almost as ill as a womans Garment. Thus it is in many other things, disguised fashions, &c. But besides these, there seemeth to be a conceipt among Men, that a licentious liberty, an unlimited looseness of Conversation, becometh the younger sort in the daies of their youth; and that nothing is more unseemly for that age, than an humble, holy subjection and obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But here ye see the wise Man, who was a Man that did much affect *decorum*, whilst he continued in his integrity, (as appeareth by that which the Queen of Sheba, observed even to an extasy, 1 Kings 10. 4, 5. *And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's Wisdom, and the House that he had built, and the Meat of his Table, and the sitting of his Servants, and the attendance of his Ministers, and their Apparrel, and his Cap-bearers, and his Assent by which he went up to the House of the Lord, there was no more Spirit in her.* And so ye may gather by

by many passages of his story, how exact he was in observing *decorum*, and shewing forth his Royal Magnificence according to his place.) He I say, that best knew, what was comely, and seemly for young Men: Sheweth here, that it is not only good, but seemly for them, even in the daies of youth, to be seriously mindful of their Creatour, and so in all things to shew themselves as Men, that have him, and his fear before their Eyes.

For (to omit this, that whatsoever is good is also comely, being suitable to the holiness and purity of God, who is most glorious and beautiful) it is plain here, by the opposition that is made between the daies of youth, and old age; that he commendeth it to them in special, as a thing exceeding fit, and seemly for the younger sort. *Remember thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth, whilst the evil daies come not.* As if he had said, It is a most absurd and unseemly thing, not to be truly mindful of him that made us in our best daies, but then to begin, when the evil daies come. And (if you mark,) it is plain by those passages that follow, That he still fastens a notorious absurdity, and unseemliness upon this carriage of Men who defer till the last. *The years draw nigh, when thou*

shalt

shalt say, *I have no pleasure in them.* How absurd and unseemly then to give up thy self to God, when thou art weary of thy self; and not before? while the Sun, or the Moon, or the Starrs be not Darkned, and the Clouds return after the Rain. A most absurd thing, to give all the cleer Sun-shiny daies of youth to sin, to lose all thy good daies, wasting and wearing them out in vanity; and then in the dull, cloudy, rainy times of old age, which are most unfit for employment, to begin to serve the Lord; and so in the verses following. So that it is τὸ ἄτοπον an absurd thing, or a thing out of place; an unseemly and uncomely thing for young men to live unmindful of their Creatour, and of the end of their Creation, whilst they are young; and to leave him nothing but the Lame and Blind Sacrifices of their decrepit age, which the Psalmist sheweth plainly. *Psal. 119. 9. Wherewithal shall a young Man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy Word.* That which is cleanly, ye know is comely: Now the Psalmist sheweth, that if they that be young will walk in clean wayes, they must take heed to the Word of God, and follow the light of it. Ye know that a fair cleane way is more pleasant and comely by farr, than a foul, deep, miry way:

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and

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and it is more comely for a man to walk in such a way, if he can, than to be mired with dirt in a foul way. So the *Psalmist* sheweth That then a young Man walketh in a cleane way, and so in a comely manner, when he followeth and obeyeth the Word of God, in an holy and gracious Conversation. On the other side, when he casteth the Word behind his back, and walketh in the Lusts of his own heart, followeth his own will, and seeketh to please himself in all things, he walketh in a foul dirty way, and is bemired (as it were) with Drunkenness, or Whoredom, or Idleness, or Prophaneness, &c. And his carriage hath no more true comeliness in it, than his clothes have, when he falleth in the mire.

CHAP. II.

THis we might see plainly, if we did but consider the nature and temper of youth, and then think what correspondence and suitableness there is between it, and true grace and holiness. He that will make a comely garment for another, must not only make one part of it proportionable to another, but must take measure of him that is to wear it, that it may be comely and fit for him. A Man's garment, though never so comely and proportionable in it self, will not

ver be comely and fit for a Child. Here then let us take measure of youth, and see how well it will become him to put on the new Man, to put on the Lord Jesus.

1. Hath the young man a special quickness of witt and apprehension? what can become him better than to search into the glorious Mysteries of Christ's holy Gospel, and not content himself with a few answers committed to Memory, which he is able to fit to some questions of Chatechism, but seriously and with most earnest endcavours to study the Doctrine of Godliness, and carefully to learn that wisdom which is from above. There is no knowledge can so well become the best witt and understanding, as the best and most excellent knowledge, and that is the true saving knowledge of God, of Christ Crucified, which St. Paul esteemed incomparably better than all his other learning. This will beautify the freshest, and most sparkling witt, it will make the very Spirit of a Man shine within him. This was young Timothy's ornament. *2 Tim. 3. 15. From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* That wisdom must needs beautify a young Mans mind, which maketh him wise unto

Salvation, wise for Heaven, which purteth
 such a light into him, as is suitable to Heaven
 and Everlasting light, which is like the wis-
 dom of the Saints and Angels above; of
 which knowledge *St. Paul.* saith, *2 Cor. 4.*
6. God who commanded the light to shine out
of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give
the light of the knowledge of the glory of God
in the face of Jesus Christ. The Sun-beams
 do as it were guild things whereon it shineth,
 and make them look bright and pleasant,
 whereas they looked dull before without any
 such lustre or comeliness. This Heavenly
 Knowledge is a shining knowledge, it bright-
 ens and beautifies the Mind and Soul: and
 the more fresh and nimble the witt and un-
 derstanding is, the more it is adorned by it:
 no skill, no knowledge; no learning is so
 comely for a young Man, as this true saving
 knowledge of God in Christ.

II. Hath the young man some strength of
 memory? what can become this Treasury
 or Store-house so well as Gold, Silver, Pre-
 cious-Stones (as the Apostle calleth holy
 Truths:) what should hay and stubble, trash
 and dirt do in so precious a Cabinet? what is
 more unseemly, than to have it filled with
 wanton idle Songs, with scurrilous jests, with
 airy vain conceits, foolish ballads, legenda-
 ry

ry tales, or the like? that which is fit for the Dung-hil is not seemly for a Cabiner.

III. Is youth full of lively and stirring affections? what is more seemly than for the quickest affections, and for the most lively motions of the Heart and Spirit to be exercised about Heavenly, and Spiritual things. The *World* is said to be *κόσμος*, because of its comliness which God gave it in the Creation. Now God hath thus ordered the World in its several parts, that the quickest and nimblest, should be highest in their rank, and the slowest and dullest, should be lowest. So the Heavens which are of a most strange and wonderful swiftness, are highest; and of other things the quickest in motion are nearest Heaven; so the Air, and in the Air the Birds: whereas the Earth being slow, and without Motion, lyeth below all the rest, and is farthest from Heaven. So what is more seemly, than for those winged affections of young Men and Women to mount up to Heaven, and the quicker and swifter they are in their Motions, the higher it becometh them to fly; what should they do creeping on the Earth like Snailles, or earthing themselves in the Earth like Moles, or mudding these lively affections in sinful fleshly pleasures? Why rather should they not
in

in their daies of youth cast their Souls upon the wing, earnestly desiring God to draw them, that they may run after him. Is it a seemly thing to see a *Lark* or an *Eagle* to make her self a burrow or nest under ground, or to plunge her self in the Mud? No, it becometh her to be aloft: so it becometh not the winged affections of the younger sort to bemudd themselves with sinful pleasures, but to be lifted up in the power of Gods Spirit, and to converse with him who is invisible. The dullness of age hath more affinity with Earth, than the vigour of youth: which yet must not perswade old Men to follow the inclination of age, and because their backs are bowed with years, to think themselves warranted to debase their Souls to earthly affections, but rather to conceive themselves directed to look themselves out a burying place; entring into a serious Meditation of the Grave, whiles their bodies by the decays of age, are daily preparing for their last dissolution, into those first earthly Principles of which they were compounded.

IV. And as the quickness of young Mens affections should thus set them in a course of holiness; so the quickness of their Spirits (which is one cause of the quickness
of

of their affections) doth exceeding well suit with true grace and holiness. The Activity, and (as the Country-word is) the Mettle that is in the younger sort is very suitable to an holy Conversation. This is one thing which maketh many men falsely to think, that Religion is not seemly for youth; but these are such as know not the power of godliness, and therefore think it to be a lumpish dulling thing. But what blindness is this to imagine, that the blessed Spirit of God is a duller to the Spirit of a Man, when he worketh upon it by his sanctifying power and vertue! No, it is enough indeed to put life into a dead heart, when the blessed Spirit affordeth his gracious Influence unto it. If the Sun doth dull and dead the Earth, the Trees, the Herbs in the Spring-time, then may ye imagine, that the Spirit of God doth dull the Spirits of Men by Sanctifying and Quickening them. It taketh away indeed their wildness and madness, that is to say, their untowardness, unseemliness, and uncomeliness; but it rather encreaseeth and purifieth their kindly vigour, and giveth them yet a greater and an higher life, and maketh them more lively than before; but with a sweet, spiritual, and heavenly kind of Life. It is true, that in the beginnings of grace
there

there is some drooping and dejectedness, but that is but in the turn when they are coming out of their natural estate from under the Curse and Wrath of God. But if once they be indeed set in a course of holiness, and find the comfort of Gods love in Christ, they shall find themselves more enlivened and quickened by the Spirit of God than they can be by nature only. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, saith the Apostle. The Spirit of Christ enlargeth the heart, striketh off the fetters of Corruptions, and maketh it more free and full of Life. Therefore *David* often calleth upon God to quicken him. He was a man naturally of a quick temper, of a fresh lively Spirit, as appeareth by that Description given of him. *1 Sam. 16. 12. He was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to.* But he knew, that grace would quicken him more, and give him a heavenly activity of Spirit, and therefore desired to be more and more quickened by it. And how can the vigour and quickness of youth be better employed than in the work and service of God? Is not the Service of God a race? And who are so fit to run, as those who are young, and of nimble Spirits? *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us:* and else-where;

forunt that ye may obtain. Which as it implyeth, a winged swiftness, and quickness of stirring affections in the service of God; so also a ready diligence, and active chearfulness in any work of his, to which the heaviness of old age is a clogging hinderance; and which doth exceeding well become the liveliness of youthful Spirits.

V. Are young Men strong, and of able Bodies? What is more comely for them, than to serve the Lord with all their Strength? The weakness of the Body, doth even make the Spirit fail and faint, and hindereth it many times in the Service of God. Strength is an help in the worship of God; and the Spirit in a strong Body, is like a work-man standing upon firm ground; which is an help and furtherance in the work.

VI. Are they full of courage, and valiant as well as strong? They can never with so much honour follow any other Captain, as they may fight under the Banner of Jesus Christ, the Prince and Captain of their Salvation. No Victory so honourable for a young Man as to kill pride, and lust in himself, and to get the old red *Dragon* under his feet. To shed an enemies blood, is no way so honourable, as to Triumph over *Satans* malice. One Mastiff can tear
cut

out another's Throat: one Bull can goe
another's side: one desperate person can shed
another's Blood: but where is that glorious
valour in a young Man, that (like *Josuah*'s
followers) setteth his feet on the necks of
five Kings of *Canaan* at once, that subdueth
his five Senses, and overcometh all Temptations
that enter in at these? He that can
strongly guard these Cinque-ports, and
stand out against all approaches in his youth,
he is an honourable Souldier of *Jesus Christ*.
And if he go on, and overcome, He shall
sit down with him in his Throne, as he over-
came and sate down with his Father in his
Throne, *Rev. 3. 21*. They that fight this
good Fight, may assure themselves, that a
Crown of Glory is laid up for them, which
they shall wear, when many renowned Cap-
tains of the World, who have been Tri-
umphant over their Enemies, Shall lye down
in sorrow and confusion. But as the Apostle
saith concerning Marriage, *If any man thinketh
that he becometh himself uncomely towards
his Virgin, if she passe the flower of her
age, and need so require, let him do what he
will he sinneth not, let them Marry. 1 Cor.
7. 36*. So if any man thinketh that he be-
cometh himself unseemly toward the courage,
strength, and valour of his Body and Mind;
if

if he wear out his youth in Peace, and do not shew himself in the Field, let him know, that Religion doth not disarm him, if the Cause be good, and the Warr necessary; otherwise to fight in Publick Warrs, is no more honourable, than it is to assault men on the high-ways side. And when a Christian hath a just Call to fight the Lords Battles, Religion doth not daunt, but double his courage. True it is; Religion takes from him the Sword of Revenge, and commandeth him to put it up into its place: it alloweth him not to answer every desperate Ruffians Challenge, which is as uncomely for a wise young man, as it is to fight with every Dog that barketh at him.

VII. Is youth accompanied many times with health? what is more seemly for him that is well, than to do well, and to serve him faithfully who giveth him every hour of health which he enjoyeth? The sickness and craziness of old age is many times a great distraction and discouragement to the Service of God: therefore they are much deceived, who make Repentance the work of the Sick-bed, and think that the fittest time for that work.

VIII. Is youth enclined to love? Christ commandeth nothing but love, and that which
love

love, supposeth and inferreth: only it requir-
eth a more noble, divine, and excellent
kind of love, and turneth it upon a more ex-
cellent object, upon which it is better be-
stowed than upon the common objects of na-
tural love, *Viz.* upon God the chiefest good,
and upon such things as are subordinate to
him.

IX. Is youth disposed to Mirth? Grace
is so far from depriving it of this, that he
which never felt true Grace, never came
where sound joy was. The heart is filled
with peace and joy in Believing; and *the*
peace of God passeth understanding. Yea, the
Word of God calleth for joy. *Rejoyce in*
the Lord; again I say rejoyce. It bettereth
and encreaseth our mirth, it doth not take it
from us.

X. Consider the young man in Relation
to others, and you shall find nothing so
seemly for him as grace and holiness, and a
Conformity to the Word of God. Nothing
more comely for a young man than so to car-
ry himself toward his Superiours as the word
of God directeth him. What more seem-
ly for the younger sort, than to give that ho-
nour, reverence, respect to Parents, Masters,
Aged People, which the word enjoyneth them?
A proud, undutiful, contemptuous carriage

in the younger sort towards their betters, doth worse become them than any deformity or blemish in the body. A young man is never more out of fashion, than when he is careless of his duty in this behalf: and again, never more comely, than when he adorneth his life with that modesty and dutiful respect to which true grace directeth younger years. It is a singular ornament to a young man to be one of those few which find out, and constantly walk in the narrow way in their youthful daies.

CHAP. III.

Vse. I. **T**His may shew, that nothing doth worse become the younger sort than sin; A licentious, ungodly, a loose unbridled conversation is a young man's greatest blemish, weakness of natural parts, shallowness of capacity, blemishes of the body, are not so unseemly in a young Man, as prophane-ness, and want of true holiness. Nothing can worse become such an one, than to forget or disobey him that made him. No blemish in the face is so unseemly, as an unruly tongue, full of vain and idle oathes, full of prophane swearing, full of cursing and bitterness, full of wanton, rotten communication, full of railing, of scoffs against godliness, against old
Age;

Age ; or as a loose lustful eye which is roving and wandring after vanity, or an ear listening after idle tales, and greedily taking in false reports, such as tend to the undeserved disgrace of others. A violent hand, a stragling foot, they are the blemishes and reproaches of the younger sort. And what is Drunkenness, but the shame and stain of that green and flourishing age ? when the witt in its prime and best time shall be besotted, and brought to a brutish dotage by the abuse of Gods good Creatures, and excess of drink, what is more unnatural and unseemly ? The stupifying of the senses, the faulting of the feet, are they not the symptoms of old age ? yes. What then is more unseemly for youth, than to over-burthen it self so with drink, as to lose for the time its wits and leggs ? Oh do not count this a matter of credit thus to keep company ! this is your shame. The sin of Whoredom, which is the young Man's *Zoar*, he counts it a little one, and hither he would fly for contentment, when the Word threatneth Fire and Brimstone, against this sin from Heaven. It is his *Dalilah*, in the lap of which sinful pleasure he thinketh he may sleep securely by the priviledge of youth. But the Scripture saith, *It is a deep ditch* Prov. 23. 27. And therefore most dangerous.

And

And as it is dangerous, so most shameful and unseemly. It is the defilement, the blasting of the flower of youth: it is the very snare of the Devil, whereby many young ones are held Captive by him at his will.

The sin of stubbornness, and contemptuous carriage towards Superiours in years, or otherwise, it is most unseemly for those of the younger sort; it layeth open the shame of their folly; and when they think highly of their own wits, and (perhaps) scorn the advice of their Auncients, they make it known to the World, that through the greatness of their folly, they know not themselves, nor their places aright, nor what becometh them. Idleness, and Vanity are most unseemly for them; the loss of these precious daies of youth; to sleep away these best daies, or to trifle them away, whiles the Sun shineth upon them, it is most unseemly.

Finally, to live in impenitency and security, not to seek the love and favour of God in Christ; to put off Repentance till old Age is most unseemly and uncomely. To sleep all the day and put off a man's main business until night, is most foolish and uncomely. Conversion to God, it is thy main work, and the beginning of all the work and service, which thou doest for him that made thee, and gave thee

thee thy life, and continueth it to thee every hour. Thou dost never truly put thy self into his Service, until thou art truly converted and turned unto him. All that thou dost in the Worship of God before, is no true Service, no work of a faithful Servant, acceptable unto God: therefore to give him that gave thee all thy daies, no part of these best daies of youth: to give him that gave thee all thy strength, no part of thy strength: to give him that gave thee all thy witt and understanding, nothing but the ruines and decays of witt, memory and understanding in old age, or sickness, is most unseemly; and such as cannot any way become any one that would be called a Christian: especially, if thou considerest, that when thou deniest thy best time to God, he may justly deny thee the rest of thy time which thou hopest to enjoy, and cut thee off in thy sins.

C H A P. IV.

Vse. 2. **T**HIS should teach Parents and Masters, that have any of the younger sort under their charge, to be very careful and diligent to teach them what doth most of all become them, even the fear of God, and Faith unfeigned. Instead of teaching them vain fashions which they are too
apt

apt to learn of them, to teach them that it will best become them not to fashion themselves according to this evil world, but to be transformed in the renewing of their mind: to teach them, that the words of heavenly wisdom, the word of God laid up in the heart, and shewed forth in the life, will be their richest ornament. Let them know, how well Humility, Modesty, Temperance, Chastity, Sobriety, Holiness and the knowledge of God will become them. Let them not only be taught how good these things are, but how seasonable, how fit they are; how seemly for them at those years, how necessary. Let them understand how ill it becometh them at this age to want these Jewels, and what deformity the contrary sins do put upon them. As it becometh them of younger years to be thus qualified, so it becometh you that are elder, by all means, both in word and conversation, to shew them what becometh them.

CHAP. IV.

Use 3. **I**F Grace and Holiness are comely, ornaments of Youth; then how unseemly is it for those that have passed the daies of Youth, to continue yet without it? hast thou out-lived thy Youth, and hast thou

thee thy life, and continueth it to thee every hour. Thou dost never truly put thy self into his Service, until thou art truly converted and turned unto him. All that thou dost in the Worship of God before, is no true Service, no work of a faithful Servant, acceptable unto God: therefore to give him that gave thee all thy daies, no part of these best daies of youth: to give him that gave thee all thy strength, no part of thy strength: to give him that gave thee all thy witt and understanding, nothing but the ruines and decays of witt, memory and understanding in old age, or sickness, is most unseemly; and such as cannot any way become any one that would be called a Christian: especially, if thou considerest, that when thou deniest thy best time to God, he may justly deny thee the rest of thy time which thou hopest to enjoy, and cut thee off in thy sins.

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thou not yet done that which thou shouldest have done in thy Youth? Not yet so remembered thy Creator as to turn unto him, and to seek him with thy whole heart? Oh blame thy self for this before the Lord! and if thou hast lost the first season, take heed thou doest not foreflow the latter. Art thou now past the Spring of Youth? It is more than time thou hadst sown in Tears! The Harvest draweth on, and then as a man hath sown, so shall he reap. He that hath sown to the Flesh, following his lusts and his will, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but He that soweth to the Spirit, being led by the Spirit in the ways of holy obedience, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Think then with thy self, if it be a shame for young men to be without Grace; it is a double shame for me that am past the daies of Youth! If God hath shewed thee patience in not cutting thee off in the sins of Youth, oh take heed of abusing that patience any longer! Wilt thou sin because thou hast escaped hitherto? God forbid! The longer thou hast sinned, the more hast thou provoked the eyes of Gods glory, the more dangerous is it to continue any longer in sin. The longer the Fig-tree had cumbered the ground, the nearer it was to the cutting down; the more it was

in danger of the Axe. Therefore repent heartily and speedily of the sins of Youth; and yet whiles thou maist do somewhat for the Lord, hast some strength and abilities for his service, let him have thy heart and hand, thy body, thy soul: sacrifice thy self to him, consecrate thy whole man to his worship and service even in thy middle-age.

C H A P. V.

Use 4. **I**F Grace be the ornament of Youth, then doubtless Sin must be the shame of Old Age. What, an old man, an old woman, and yet a graceless sinner? A gray-head found in the ways of unrighteousness, the ways of folly? What is this but to be a spectacle of reproach among men? How many years hast thou lived an enemy to God? Couldst thou find no time for reconciliation in thy Youth, nor in thy middle age, nor yet now thou art thus far gone in years? What is an impenitent old man, but a kind of monster among men? What a shame is it to see a gray-head quaffing by the fire-side in an Ale-house; a man of fifty or sixty years haunting the Ale-house, and wanton dalliance. A profane Oath in an old mans mouth, how odious and shamefull is it? Is it not a double shame for old men

to be more and more covetous the elder they are, to cleave more and more close to the world? As one that is to be executed, if he hath his hands at liberty when he is turned off the Ladder, will catch hold again, and cling fast unto it, being loth to let go his hold: so such a one being summoned by death to leave the world, catcheth hold again, fastening his very heart unto it, and cleaving more strongly and more closely thereunto. How much better were it to have loosened the heart from the world by unfeigned repentance, that the world and it may part with ease? For part ye must, though thy heart should be pulled in pieces in parting. How ill doth it become an old man, that all this while he hath not learned to see into the vanity of the world, which a wise man in a little time of experience may easily discern? O thou old sinner, learn greatly then to bewail the sins of thy Youth, that length of time wherein thou hast gone on in sin, wherein thou hast hardened thy heart, and resisted the spirit of God: and now be very earnest with the Father of mercies, to pass by the multitudes of thy sins, which in these many years of thy life, thou hast made thy self and others guilty of.

C H A P. VI.

Use 5. **L** Astly, yea that are young, let this enter into your hearts, and be ye perswaded that nothing doth so well fit you, nothing so well become your years, as to remember your Creator, as to know, to love, to fear, to serve and obey him that made you. Now is the Spring, now is the time of sowing in tears, even in your Youth: and if ye sow so, ye shall in Youth reap the first fruits of comfort. Now is the day, and therefore work now; the night cometh, darkness cometh; yea the night of spiritual darkness and blindness of mind may come, a dreadfull gloomy night may shade your Souls, the spirit of God withdrawing his light, against which you have so long sinned in the pride of Youth, and Satan drawing a black veil over your Souls: then there is a woful night within; the night of an hardened heart that cannot repent, and of a seared conscience, and a reprobate sense may come, when none can rightly work the works of God. Oh then! what an extreme folly is it for you now to sleep in Sin whiles it is day, and whiles mercy is offered, and the way of life is shewed, and the works which God hath ordained for his people to walk in, are laid before you? Now

then it becometh you to flee youthfull lusts, and not to stay till they flee you : Now learn to hate all sin, (and especially the sins to which your age enclineth you) even as Death, as Hell. Do not think that the sins of Youth will become you , because Youth is enclinable to them, but rather think they are so much the more unseemly, because nature corrupted , enclineth Youth unto them. Sin is so contray unto that εὐταξία, and right order of things which God hath made , that it enclineth men to those things which are most unseemly for them. And this must needs be so, for Sin is most contrary unto God ; now God by his work enclineth every Creature to that which becometh it : and so by his work upon man in the Creation , he did frame in him a propension and inclination to that which did every way become him best. Now Sin being quite contrary unto God , and seizing upon man's nature, did so corrupt it , as to encline it to that which is most unseemly for it. So man in general is inclined to earthly, to bodily, and sensible things , sutable to the body , and to neglect heavenly and spiritual things , which are sutable to his Soul and inner man, which (considering the nature and creation of man) is most absurd and unseemly ; as if a man should

should be more carefull of his foot than of his Head. What comparison is there between the Soul and the Body? Is not that of far greater excellency than this? How unseemly a thing is it to seek the satisfying and contenting of the body, rather than of the spiritual and better part of a man's self? So Sin enclineth old men in age to become more earthly and covetous than before; Now this is most unseemly. So the Heathen could observe, counting it as foolish and absurd for an old man to grow more covetous, and eager after the world, as for a Traveller to provide himself so much the more carefully for his Journey, the nearer he cometh to his Inne, or Journey's end. Were it not an unseemly folly, when a man is even at home, and seeth the smook of his own Chimney, to seek about carefully for a fresh Horse, and other necessaries fit for a Journey of many hundred miles? So what more foolish and unseemly than for an old man, travelling to his last home, to be the more carefull of earthly things, the nearer he cometh to his grave, which are useful to him only by the way? And as sin enclineth old age to that which is most unseemly; so also it doth younger years. Oh do not think these things seemly for thee, to which Nature, corrupted by

by sin enclineth thee; no more than that is wholesome for a sick man, to which his Stomach, viciated by a disease doth move him. Esteem Grace of all things, to be the richest ornament: put on Christ Jesus, that thou maist partake of the beauty of his Grace and Spirit, who is the fairest of ten thousand, that thou maist be one of those in whom God himself through Christ Jesus is delighted.

SERMON IV..

Eccles. 12. 1. *In the daies of thy youth.*

CHAP. I.

IN the next place we may observe, under what terms the daies of Old Age are opposed to the daies of Youth: it is under the notion of *evil daies*. They are opposed to the daies of Youth, as evil to good; therefore, hence I observe,

Obs. That the daies of Youth, are good daies. So the opposition teacheth us to infer; for they are such daies as men enjoy, while the evil daies come not. The *Hebrews* call young men by such a name as imployeth choice: and a young man in that Language,

guage, is as much as a chosen or selected man, a man picked out of the multitude for special use: and so the time of Youth is expressed as a chosen selected time. So in this very place; for as he had said before, *Eccles. 11. 9. Rejoyce O young man, or O thou chosen selected one.* So here; *Remember thy Creator in the daies of thy Youth.* שְׂמַח בְּחֹרֶךָ *בְּיָמֵי בְּחֹרֶךָ, or thy choicest daies.* So that ye see the ordinary expression used in primitive significant Tongue, which is (as it were) the fountain of all Languages, noteth out the time of Youth unto us, as a good, yea, as a choice selected time. So much (I think) the Psalmist implyeth too. *Psal. 71. 17, 18. O God thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old, and gray-headed, O God forsake me not, &c.* where he seemeth to set the daies of Old Age against the daies of Youth, as evil against good. O thou hast taught me from my Youth: Thou hast vouchsafed me thy presence, thy Spirit to teach and guide me in those good and pleasant daies of Youth; those good daies, when I in confidence of thy presence and assistance encountered the Bear and Lion, and rescued my Lambs; Those daies when I assaulted the *Philistine*,
and

& took away the reproach from *Israel*: Those daies, when with a lively and ravished Spirit, I leaped and daunced before the Ark: But now the evil daies of Old Age, the winter of my life is growing upon me: the times are coming when I shall see no pleasure in them; when Clothes shall scarce suffice to warm me: and therefore now, O my God! forsake me not; withdraw not thy presence: now in special I find need of thee, that thou maist make those daies good unto me through thy love and Spirit, which otherwise ~~fin~~ would make exceeding evil and wofull to me.

C H A P. II.

WHerefore, that this may be made more clear unto us, let us consider how, and in what respects the daies of Youth are called good daies. *They are good daies,*

1. Because they are the first daies of a man's life. Childhood is but (as it were) a preparative to the life of man: Children, while they are Children, have but some imperfect beginnings of the life of reason, which is the proper and peculiar life of man: therefore we may reckon the daies of Youth, as the first daies of man's life, when he first beginneth to live as a man, and to live the
life

life of reason in some degree of perfection. Now ye know, that the first in every kind hath the preheminance; the first-born of men, the firstlings of beasts; the first-fruits of the earth; the morning of the day; the first age of the world; the spring of the year. So there is a kind of preheminency in the first daies of man's life, which are the daies of Youth; they are a man's prime and his good daies.

2. The daies of Youth are good daies, because ordinarily they are the daies of best health and strength: daies wherein we are of able bodies for any special service. For although it be true, that in the worship of God, bodily exercise profiteth but little, in comparison of the inward power of godliness; yet strength and health, when they are made serviceable to a sanctified upright heart, are of special use, both in the immediate worship of God, and in the performance of many offices of love, which we ought to do towards our Brethren in the Lord. *Mens sana in corpore sano* (as they say) a sound mind, and an heavenly spirit, furthered in the worship and service of God, by a strong, healthy, well-tempered body, hath a great advantage in it's work; and in that case, the daies of health and strength are good daies. In Prayer; although the strength and force of
Prayer

Prayer doth not lie in the strength of the sides, or loudnes of the voice; yet it is no smal advantage to the Spirit, when in it's fervour and strength of affection, it gathereth up and putterth forth all it's powers in earnest supplication before the throne of Grace; if then it hath a sound healthy body, able to bear the intention of a fervent spirit, without fainting or distraction. You know that if the arrow be long, and drawn to the head, it is needfull that the bow and the string should be of sufficient strength to hold drawing. And a Christian, that will not content himself to shoot those fools bolts, mentioned *Eccles. 5. 1.* but desireth to send forth winged shafts of fervent Prayer that shall pierce the Clouds, and enter the Heavens, findeth it an help not to be despised, when the strength and health of his body is suitable to the vigour of his spirit. This holdeth (as ye may easily conceive) in those exercises of hearing, reading, meditation, &c.

3. Daies of Youth are times wherein the powers of the Soul are also quick, lively and able by the communion with the body. The Soul by reason of it's near conjunction of the body hath it's Childhood, Youth and decaying time. In younger years it hath those golden daies, wherein the understanding is quick
in

in apprehension, teachable, and apt to receive impression; the Memory faithfull, the Judgment good and sound; the Affections strong and stirring: Therefore these are the good daies wherein it is fit to be used in the work and service of God. And as in the Spring, all these concurring together, the Trees in their fresh clothing; the face of the Earth renewed, the beauty of Herbs and Flowers, together with the Sun's shining brightly in his strength and glory, make up good daies; whereas in the Winter, the brightness of the Sun maketh but an imperfect good day, whiles the Trees and Fields are stripped, dead and withered; the ground covered with mire and dirt: so the meeting of these together, the birth-right of Youth, the strength and health of the Body, the quickness of the Senses, the activeness and abundance of the Spirits, the perfections of the Soul, &c. make the daies of Youth good daies: whereas, although in the winter of Old Age the Sun may shine; the principles of wisdom stored up in Youth may be preserved; yet there are those defects naturally clogging that dying age, which do ecclipse the brightness, and lessen the goodness of those daies.

C H A P. III.

Use 2. **T**His may serve to reprove those, who do allow some fleshly liberty to the daies of Youth. Many, who themselves are aged, out of a kind of fatherly experienced gravity (as they would have men think) and out of a kind of moderation, to which their years have brought them (as they will have us believe) do give liberty to a kind of latitude in the ways of Youth; and young men must be born with. Who doubteth but that there is a Christian moderation and compassion to be exercised towards such infirmities of the flesh, which the Spirit wrestleth and laboureth against either in young or old; when the heart being given up to Christ, and brought under the sovereign command of his glorious Gospel and blessed Spirit, cannot yet wholly free it self from the law of Rebellion, nor utterly shake off the body of Death? But out of a pretence of levity to flatter the enormities of Youth, and to excuse those vicious unbridled courses, which stain the glory of those best daies; what is it but to say, that hard Frosts, deep Snows, Inundations, thick mire and dirt, are not to be accounted strange in *May*, nor to be wondered at in the prime and spring of the year. Is it
to

to be endured, when the best daies of a man's life are wasted away in such courses as are contrary to the end for which a man liveth ; most contrary to the glory of that great God, who hath given them these choice daies of Youth. To speak plainly ; when are you more carefull to fence your Copses, Pastures, Meadows, than in the Spring : and will ye say the spring of our life (which is the time of Youth) may be laid open to the invasion of lusts, to the assaults of Satan, to the pleasures of Sin ? Let other men applaud their own gravity, and condemn the rashness of others ; I cannot believe that *Solomon* wanted either years, gravity, wisdom or due moderation, when he checked the folly of Youth in an holy Irony, *Eccles. 11.* and setteth before all vain young men the Judgement of the great day, shewing that for all these things, even these excesses of Youth, they shall be made to give account : nor when he did put down this serious admonition in the words of this Text, backed with so many pressing motives, *Remember now thy Creator in the daies of thy youth, while the evil daies come not, &c.* and had there been any defect in the pen-man, yet I am sure the Holy Ghost which held his hand, would not have suffered him to write one syllable amiss.

Neither

Neither doth the Psalmist return an answer
 futable to these mens conceits when the
 question is moved, *Wherewithall shall a young
 man cleanse his way?* but quite contrary,
By taking heed thereto according to thy word.
 Where ye see both the Rule by which, and
 the manner how they are to frame their
 Courses, requireth a special strictness. The
 very Word of God, that pure and holy Rule
 of Righteousness, and not the customs of
 the time, nor the ordinary practice, nor
 lusts of youth must guide them, and this
 Rule they must heed with much attention and
 watchfulness, having one eye upon their
 ways, another upon the word: taking heed
 thereto according to the word, ever marking
 the steps they tread, and observing how it
 suiteth with the precious truth of God. This
 is the wisdom of the Antient of daies, and
 whatsoever is contrary to it, gray hairs can-
 not exempt from folly.

CHAP. IV.

SECT. I.

II. **T**his should perswade the younger
 sort, not to make those daies evil
 which God hath made good: Oh do not a-
 buse your choycest daies to the basest em-
 ployments.

ployments. Think the spring of your age too good for Satan, too pretious for Lust, for Drunkenness, for Vanity, too good to be so spent, that in old age ye shall not be able to remember it without shame, without a sting. Ye know what the Lord spake long since to Israel, *If ye walk contrary unto me, I also will walk contrary unto you.* How can ye walk more contrary unto God, than to make those the worst daies which he hath made the best? To have abused any of God's good Creatures under the Law had been sin, to have profaned the first fruits a double sin, to give any of our time to the service of sin, is unworthy of a Christian; but to abase the prime of Youth, and the crown of our years, the choicest of our daies to this slavery, what is it but to set our selves to cross the Lord in the wisdom of his wayes, and to make these daies evil because he hath made them good? Regard not those who scoff in their carnal folly at the uniting of these two together, Youth and Holiness, as at an unequal match: as if a young man and an old woman were joynd together in marriage. Assure thy self, that nothing can so well become the best daies as the best affections, and the best conversation: that nothing is more seemly for a vessel of honour, than to be

seasoned with true grace and sanctification, even while it is now, in the daies of Youth, 1 Joh. 2. 13, 14. *I write unto you young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. Again, I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* Here is the excellency of young men, not that they have so much strength of body, or daring Spirits to challenge or lay others on the ground; as that they have strength of grace, and power of the Spirit to wrestle with Satan in all his temptations and tread them under their feet; when they have the word of God abiding in them, and powerfully enabling them to wrestle with Principalities and Powers, and so to wrestle as to overcome, These are young men whom the beloved Apostle of Christ vouchsafeth to write in a peculiar manner: and indeed such are young men, whose Youth a man ought to despise.

SECT. II.

TAKE heed then of making these good daies of Youth to be evil daies, which God hath made good daies.

Quest. But some will say perhaps, how are they made evil daies?

Sol. I. I answer in general: The daies of Youth (good in themselves) are made evil, when they are spent in unregeneration, spent in a state of impenitency, without sound conversion to God, without holy communion with him. Every young man, who is not brought home to God by unfeigned repentance in his Youth, maketh the daies of his Youth to be evil daies, *Rom. 6. 20, 21.* *When ye were the servants of Sin, ye were free from righteousness: what fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death.* Whiles a man is an unregenerate person, he is a servant of Sin, and all that while he maketh his daies evil daies, his life an evil life; for he is not able to shew any fruit that he hath reaped of all his works and wayes; no true benefit, no sound comfort ariseth out of all his courses. So it is with old men that live in the service of sin without true regeneration. In like manner it is in young men that are unregenerate, let them do what they will, or can, let them fill themselves with all manner of earthly pleasures; let them please themselves every way, and do what they can to enjoy these dayes of Youth, walking in the wayes of their own Heart, and in the sight of their Eyes, please their Senses of all sorts,

&c. Nay, let them spend their daies of Youth better than so, even in Wars, in Study and Learning, in getting some useful & commendable Trade; yet so long as they are unregenerate, and do not seriously remember & turn to their Creator now in these daies of their Youth, they have no true fruit (worth the having) of all their endeavours, of all their daies of Youth. Now doth not a man make his daies evil daies, when he spendeth them so, that no true good cometh of them? when they bring forth more evil than good; so much evil, as that the good that might come of them is not good unto them: for the end of these things is death. When a man is still hastening to his destruction, running on towards his death (as every one unconverted is) what fruit can there come of any thing he goeth about? All ye that are young, who put off repentance and are not regenerate, nor labour to be so, ye make the daies of your Youth, which ye so rejoyce in, evil daies, cursed daies, ye walk under the wrath and curse of God, and are not freed from the sentence of condemnation. Whiles ye are merry and jocund, whiles your Hearts cheer you, ye do but sport your selves in the midst of your own misery and dangers. Canst thou enjoy one good day whiles thou hast no assurance

rance for an hour to be free from the fire that never goeth out; whiles thou standest accursed, and hast the sentence of condemnation written upon thy conscience, and not washed off by the blood of Christ spinkled by faith: oh these are evil bitter daies, if thou couldest discern them rightly, wherein Heaven frowneth upon thee, God is angry with thee; and all thy sins remain unpardoned! Therefore repent and make thy peace with God, that so the daies of thy Youth may be good daies; daies wherein thou maist be assured that God is appeased with thee; daies wherein thou maist walk in the bright Sun-shine and light of his countenance; daies wherein thou maist have thy fruit in holiness for the present, and be assured that the end will be everlasting life: then shall the daies of thy Youth be good and blessed daies unto thee.

SECT. III.

II. More especially these good daies of Youth are made evil daies, when they are spent in any, or divers of those sins to which on the one side Youth is commonly accustomed; and which on the other side in a right consideration of things, are most unseemly and unfit for Youth.

1. One sin is *whoredom*: if any thing can

make the daies of Youth, of good to become evil daies, this will do it; when the body, which is as a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and should be consecrated and dedicated to him from the first building or framing of it as it were, shall be made a cage of unclean lusts, how great is this prophanation? If the Temple at *Jerusalem*, when it was new built, should have been made a Stews (as one of the Popes is said to have made his Palace) and then have been left to be employed as a Temple for God when it grew old and ruinous; would not the earth have opened her mouth to swallow up those who should have thus prophaned it? O young men! how dangerous is it then, whilst your bodies are young, and should be esteemed and used as new-built Temples, wholly dedicated unto God, his glory and service, to defile them with those sins, intending when they are old, decayed, and ruinous buildings (and not till then) to use them as Temples of the Holy Ghost. *St. Paul* saith, *If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy*, 1 Cor. 3. 17. Therefore if any one hath not kept his Garments clean in this regard, let him without delay wash and be clean, wash away his guilt by the blood of Christ; wash away these lusts and sinfull inclinations by the Spirit

Spirit of Christ, by unfeigned repentance and amendment of Heart and Life: and for the time to come (according to *Dauids* counsel, *Psal.* 119. 9.) Let them make clean their wayes from this foul sin, by taking heed unto them, according to such parts of the word as these: *Flee youthful lusts, but follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart,* 2 Tim. 2. 22. And that *Whore-mongers and Adulterers,* God will judge, Heb. 13. 4. And that of St. Paul, 1 Thess. 4. 3, 4, 5. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour: not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which knew not God.*

2. *Drunkenness*; which, as it is enough to make any part of a man's life evil, so it is a great blemish to a young man, and maketh the daies of his Youth, evil and wretched daies. The wise man sheweth, that the ruines of Old Age do make the Keepers of the House tremble, and the strong ones to bow themselves; the Hands and Leggs to shake. But how shamefull is it for young men of firm and strong bodies, to bring a drunken Palsey upon themselves, whereby

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they

they are staggering in the streets, their Leggs even failing them? or a brutish Lethargy, whereby they are not able to arise from the place where they sit or lie? ye that are Parents look to it, that your Children come not into such infectious company, as many entice them. Take heed ye that are young, of besotting your Brains and Understandings, which now are naturally fresh and quick (if ever) with this swinish sin: Consider that weighty Charge of our Saviour, *Luke 21. 34. Take heed, lest at any time your Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness.*

3. *Pride* is another sin, that is enough to make the daies of Youth to be evil daies. That which made good Angels wicked Devils, is enough to make the best daies of a man's life evil and miserable: What is more seemly for the younger sort, than true modesty and humility, which God accepteth, blesteth and crowneth with graces here, and glory hereafter? What worse than Pride and a disdainful Carriage? want of farther experience should make them in many things to suspend their Judgements, unless it be in such as are cleer and evident. Contempt, and scornfull behaviour towards the Ancients: Self-conceit; as if Wisdom should die with them:

them: Self-will and Stubbornness; an unmoveable Stiffness in their own groundless opinions, and unwarrantable purposes, with other fruits of Pride; they do even deface the good daies of Youth, and make them evil.

4. *Idleness* is another sin which marreth these good daies, which bringeth not only a rust upon them, but letteth loose the lusts of Youth, and maketh it exceeding sinful. If any should flee this sin (as all should) then especially the younger sort ought to observe it above others. Is it not a misery of miseries, that those golden daies should be worn out in sluggishness? that those abilities of body and mind, which are at their best, should want employment? and want they cannot, work they must; they are made of such a temper, that they cannot be without motion. If the Heavens cannot stand still, nor the Air fix it self in one place, and abide without stirring, no more can the minds of young men, nor the thoughts of their hearts abide without inward workings of spirit. O young man! thou canst not keep thine eye-lids from stirring; thy Lungs from moving; thy Heart and Pulse from beating; and canst thou keep thy Soul and the affections of thy Heart from stirring, which are more active than any part of thy body? No, they will have their

their course: and if in any idle, sluggish carelessness, thou lettest them go as a Ship without a Rudder or Pilot, the event is like to be wofull, and thou art running upon the Rocks; Satan filling the Sails of thy affections with contrary winds and hellish suggestions, which drive thee from the Haven of Peace to the gulph of everlasting destruction. What a world of snares hath the Devil ready for thee, whiles he finds thee idle? How many enticing objects, and dangerous temptations? When shouldest thou provide against the winter of thy life, but now in the spring of thy daies? Old Age is almost unteachable; and if thou learnest not in thy Youth, but spendest it in lazy ignorance, it will be very hard (if not impossible) to learn in thine old age, when thou art more ready to forget than to learn. It is a most miserable spectacle to see an ignorant old man or woman, which hath lost the best time of Youth in idleness, and not treasured up the principles of heavenly truths: Oh how incapable are they of the things of God! how likely to perish for want of knowledge, how incapable of Knowledge it self? Rest and ease is fitter for Old Age, than for Youth: Labour, Diligence, Watchfulness, Industry, are things which become those
good

good daies. In a word ! when any sin aboundeth, and any lust prevailerh, it is enough to make the dayes of Youth evil daies. Therefore ye that are young , and yet enjoy the good daies of your life , do not ye make them evil. Remember your Creator in the daies of your Youth, take heed to your ways according to the word of God , so shall these daies indeed be good daies to you , and you shall prepare your selves either for an honourable Old Age , or for a blessed end, and an happy death; preventing the evils of Old Age, and putting you in possession of everlasting life, which never feeleth the decays of Age.

Finally, let me in a word beseech those who have already out-lived their best daies, to look back seriously and speedily upon the times and courses of their Youth, and see how those daies have been spent, observing what matter of joy and thanksgiving, or what causes of grief and humiliation they may find, and accordingly to be affected. If you have made them evil daies , how should you mourn for this? How should you seek God now that it draweth towards the eleventh hour, before the night cometh when no man can work ; which burieth all secure loiterers and unprepared ones in an everlasting

ing night of utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. The night cometh, the darkness is coming; yet before it cometh, do ye that great work, that your Soul may live and not die eternally!

CHAP. V.

Eccles. 12. 1—*before the evil days come.*

OF the next point I shall speak very briefly, and that is this.

Observ. That the daies of Old Age are evil daies. So the Spirit of God here calleth them. This the Holy Ghost here, and in other Verses of this Chapter sheweth in divers circumstances. Here he saith, They are daies wherein there is no pleasure; daies wherein there is much matter of grief and vexation, little contentment: when a man's life is like gloomy daies, such as *St. Paul* met with in his Sea-voyage, when neither Sun nor Starrs for many daies appeared; to such daies Old Age is here compared; daies of darkness, wherein Sun, Moon and Starrs have their light hidden and darkened; and the Clouds return after the Rain. Though the showres fall, yet it doth not clear up, but the Clouds grow up, and gather together again: so it is in Old Age, the end of one trouble is but the beginning of another affliction

tion like to that. In the words following these evils of Old Age are more particularly expressed and numbred up. The keepers of the house do tremble; the arms which are to guard and defend the body, shake with the Palsey: the strong men, the Leggs which are the pillars to bear up this house of clay, begin to fail with weakness, and to double under their burthen like posts worn and weakened with age. The Grinders, the Teeth cease, because they are few, and the Windows shall be darkned, &c. In a word! we may summe up the evils of these Aged daies in these two heads: Evils of Loss, and Evils of Sense. The loss of Contentments in God's good blessings: the loss of ability for many good Offices: on the other side, the suffering of many inconveniences in body and mind, which maketh a man a burthen to himself, being burthened with such an heap of years.

C H A P. VI.

Use. **T**He use of this is to renew the former Exhortation to the younger sort, that they may prevent these evil daies, and remove the evil of them by timely repentance, and sincere obedience in their Youth. Impenitency and ungodliness makes the good daies of Youth to become evil daies;

daies ; repentance and an holy conversation make the evil daies of Old Age to be good. Godliness is profitable to all things, saith the Apostle, and so it is profitable for all times, for times of Youth as well as times of Old Age ; for health, for sickness, for life, for death : it shall do thee good, and not evil all thy daies. If Old Age bring so many inconveniences with it, how careful shouldst thou be to remove the guilt of thy sins before the burthen of Old Age cometh upon thee ? If these wounds of thy conscience be truly healed by the blood of Christ aforehand, sprinkled on by the hand of faith, then shall thy Spirit be enabled to bear the infirmities of Old Age ; yea, thou shalt be able to do all things through the Spirit of Christ, strengthening and supporting thee. Oh how miserably is that poor Soul burthened, that hath an heap of years, and an heap of sins unpardoned, lying upon it ? but how blessed, how honourable is the gray hoary head found in the way of righteousness, whose unrighteousness is forgiven, whose sin is covered ? Such shall be Trees planted in the house of the Lord, which in their Old Age shall be more and more fat and flourishing ; and their last works (as it is said of the Church of *Thyatira*, Revel. 2. 19.) shall be
more

more than the first: their last daies better than the first. Such a good old age they shall have, as divers of the Saints are said to have had. Labour then so to live now, that the evils of your Age may be mitigated and removed.

But on the other side, how evil and wretched must those daies of Old Age be, which are accompanied with the guilt of many sins? when years encrease, and wickedness encreaseth; when a man will not be admonished, but as he hath been rebellious in his Youth, so he will be obstinate in his Old Age? Oh take heed of this! if these evil daies have overtaken thee before thou hast put away thy sins, before thou hast sought the Lord with all thy heart, repent now in the anguish and bitterness of thy soul.

S E R M O N. V.

Eccles. 12.1.—*before the evil days come, &c.*

C H A P. I.

THUS ye have heard, how Old Age is said to consist of evil daies: now here we see how the Holy Ghost doth call away the thoughts of young men from the pleasures
and

and vanities of Youth, wherein they are usually drowned and over-whelmed, and giveth them a foresight of a change: letteth them know, that it will not alwayes be thus with them; they must look for other times hereafter to pass over them; now they have their good daies, their daies of Youth, but they must perswade themselves there be other daies coming; these good daies will not last alwayes. Hence I observe,

Observ. That it is Christian wisdom to foresee and provide for changes ere they come: it is a brutish and sensual folly to have the Heart so possessed and taken up with present prosperity and earthly contentments of any kind, as not to have any serious and effectual regard of such changes as may be brought upon us. Therefore the Spirit of God having to do with young men in this place, who did please themselves in themselves, and in their present youthful wayes, delights and contentments, he setteth before their eyes a lively image of Old Age; with the many evils, grievances, and blemishes of it: yea, he leadeth them along to the death-bed, and hangerh out their winding-sheet before their eyes; and by the way presenteth them with many objects unpleasing to sensuality, and vain youthfull affections.

First,

First, evils in general, and then the loss of all earthly pleasures; then dimness and darkness, weeping, cloudy weather, Ver. 2. and so he goeth on in the words following. Thus doth St. *James* deal with secure and carnal rich men, whose hearts did rest with a kind of muddy contentment in their abundance of worldly things, not seriously thinking of sad alterations that might follow, *Jam. 5. 1, 2.* Go to now ye rich men; weep & howl for the misery that shall come upon you: your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten, &c. and ver. 5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in the day of slaughter. As the beast that is full fed and fatted, is wanton and frolick, feeding without fear or foresight of the Butchers Axe, even in the same morning when he is to die before night, even in the day of Slaughter: so do ye please yourselves, and satisfie your own lusts without any serious consideration aforehand of the Axe of God's wrath, that lyeth at the root of all such unfruitfull Trees, and is ready to give an irrecoverable stroke: ye do not carefully forethink of the evils that shall come upon you, and therefore I present these unto your thoughts. We have a notable example in this kind, both of wisdom in
H Noah,

Noah, and of folly in the men of that Generation living together with him, *Heb. 11.7*. By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear prepared an Ark for the saving of his House, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Here was his notable faith and heavenly wisdom. He was warned of God of things not seen as yet, not only of such things as at that time were not to be seen in present being, when he received this warning, but of things, the whereof were never seen in the world before of such things as neither he, nor any of his Fore-fathers from *Adam* to his own time ever had any experience of, viz. The things mentioned *Genes. 6. 17*. Behold, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life from under Heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. These were strange things not seen as yet, nor ever heard of since man was created, that the Lord at one stroke should destroy so many millions of his creatures, not only men, but men, and children, but all other things that breathed. It was now a great work of Faith to believe this, beyond the experience of the world, and against the mocks and scorn

of the whole world; and great wisdom to provide so carefully against it, preparing an Ark for the saving of his House: Herein he condemned the unbelief and folly of the world, whose sensuality, earthly-mindedness, and deep security, our Saviour declarereth, *Matth. 24. 38.* in the daies that were before the flood, *They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, untill the day that Noah entred into the Ark, and knew not untill the flood came, and took them all away.* Noah did foresee, and prepare for this notable change before it came; but the world of the ungodly continued in deep and dead security: They would not believe that the flood-gates of Heaven should be opened so wide, as to pour down an universal deluge upon the earth; they knew not, they considered not of this wofull change, untill the flood came, and took them all away.

CHAP. II.

NOW the reasons why this is to be accounted a point of wisdom, necessary for every Christian, are,

1. Because a change will certainly come, *Eccles. 1. 2. Vanity of vanities* (saith the Preacher) *all is vanity.* All is vanity and uncertainty: There is no perpetuity, nothing

changeable in man, or in the outward condition of man here on earth; yea, many changes and strange alterations may befall those that seem to be in a most settled condition; many may come, some must come. Thou that art in prosperity, maist fall into adversity; Thou that art rich, maist become poor: Thou that hast Children, maist become childless: Thou that hast Friends, maist become friendless: Thou that hast health, maist have sickness: Thou that art young and strong, maist become old and impotent: Thou that art a liberty, maist be a prisoner. These things may come; but there is another change that must come, namely, Death. Thou that art living man or woman must be turned into a dead carcase: Thou that art now reckoned among the living, must be accounted among the dead. Thou that now seest, hearest, speakest, walkest, &c. must become blind, speechless, senseless, not able to move or stir: a corps without life, breath or motion. Thou that now conversest with men, must be forgotten, and become a dead man out of mind: yea, thou that now sittest here at this time, must stand before the Lord's Judgement-Seat. Oh then it is wisdom to be aforehand with these changes and alterations, that they may not surprize and overtake thee unprovided.

2. It is uncertain how, and when these changes shall come, *Jam. 4. 13, 14.* Go to now ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away: For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this and that. Our life is so uncertain, that in that respect it may rather be said to appear then to be: and it appeareth but for a very little time, the date of it is soon expired. It is even a vapour, and a vapour doth quickly vanish, riseth in the morning, and is dissolved before noon: we may promise our selves years, but are not sure of the next day. So it proved in that rich mans case, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years.* He had a short answer, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee.* It is therefore a necessary point of wisdom to foresee and provide for this change.

3. Great miseries and inconveniences follow upon such alterations, when they are not foreseen and provided for: many opportunities are lost, which never can be recovered; such changes happen as deprive men of all ability of doing that which they might

have done at ease, if they had foreseen these things, and taken their time: and men may look back with many sad thoughts, and much bitterness of spirit upon their neglects and losses this way, when it is too late. Some few daies, weeks, months, wilfully lost and wasted before, will seem more worth unto them than all the world; and the treasures and glory of the world, when once these changes have overtaken them, and come upon them unawares, and disabled them for ever.

Much discomfort cometh upon this providence: when changes happen which are grievous in themselves; they become more grievous to us for want of preparation. That which in its own nature is a misery, is made a double misery to us, when we are not prepared for it. What discomfort will sickness bring, when it cometh unlook'd for; and when we have not prepared for it by searching our hearts; casting up our accounts; getting assured pardon of our sins at the hands of God? when a sick body and a guilty conscience meet together, there is a woful condition: when a man shall lie down in his death bed with the guilt of all his sins lying upon him, and pressing upon his Soul, there is a grievous burthen; and especially when death cometh, and findeth him not regenerate;

rate ; findeth in him no other life , but that which floweth from the union between the Soul and Body ; no new spiritual life issuing from an inseparable communion between Christ and him. Oh how will death insult over such a one ? how will the name , the thought , the visage of death dismay him ? when it meeteth him alone , not joyned to Christ , and entreth into a single combat with him ; not strengthened by an happy union with the Lord of life ; will it not tear him in pieces as a Lion might do a little Dog ? It is a double misery not to be aforehand with death , not to be provided for this change.

4. on the other side , much ease , much good , much comfort followeth upon a timely foresight , and wise preparation for such changes. When a sad and sudden change was brought upon *Hezekiah* ; a sharp fit of sickness (supposed to have been the Plague) and a peremptory message from the Lord by the Prophet ; *Set thine House in order , for thou shalt die and not live.* Did it not wonderfully ease his burthen , that he was so well prepared for this change , and able to say (his conscience bearing him witness) *2 Kings 20. 3. I beseech thee O Lord , remember now how I have walked before thee in truth , and with a perfect heart ; and have done*

that which is good in thy sight. What a comfort will it be, when thy health is turned into sickness, thy strength into weakness; when thou art fastened to thy bed, and hast received in thy self the sentence of death; if then thou findest thy self provided for this change. A sweet comfort it shall be in old age (when the Grasshopper is a burden, even the lightest thing) it shall then ease that burden of years that makes thee stoop; if thou didst in time foresee and provide for it, turning to the Lord aforehand; that so thy gray hairs may be found in the way of righteousness.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. **T**His may serve to reprove the great sensuality and security that is naturally among us; that we look at things present, and do not seriously take to heart such changes as may befall us. A Comment upon *Psal. 49.* would be a fit enlargement of this use, where the Psalmist discourseth excellently of this point; both shewing the folly of men trusting to outward things as to certainties, and declaring his own spiritual wisdom which God had taught him in preparing for any changes that might befall him. First, he calleth for attention for all sorts of men throughout the world. *Hear this*

this all ye people, give ear all ye Inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. It concerneth all sorts nearly, and all sorts are faulty therein, and need to be stirred up by way of remembrance. Then he doth very effectually seek to win attention by the excellency of the things which he is about to deliver. *My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding*; such wisdom as many worldly wise men never learned: yea, he sheweth in the next verse, that it is an hidden wisdom; and as a parable to natural men for the most part. Then he entrencheth upon his discourse, and in the first place be-
ginneth with himself, ver. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the daies of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?* as if he had said; I do foresee changes and afflictions, I look for assaults from Satan; but I am armed against them through the mercy of God, who hath pardoned my sins, and therefore when such evils come, and Satan shall seek to entangle my Conscience, as in a snare, as if these were sure arguments of God's hatred against me: I will not fear, I am prepared for these things. Then on the other side in the next verse unto the fifteenth, he goeth on at large, declaring the folly

folly and blindness of worldly-minded men, & secure sinners in this case. *They that trust in their Wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their Riches, none of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:* They trust in outward things, as if they were enduring substance, and their hearts are lifted up with thoughts of their Wealth and Riches; they think not seriously of changes to come; they trust in their strength and healthy tempers in their Youth, they rest their hearts in their present carnal contentments, sinful pleasures, &c. as if these things should alwayes continue; whereas they can neither rescue or ransom themselves or dearest friends from the power of death, that he should live for ever, and not see corruption: *For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person shall perish, and leave their wealth to others.* This sheweth their great sensuality and fortishnes, that though they have daily experience of divorces & separations made by death between men and their wealth, their honours, their pleasures, and that they are forced to leave all, and go naked out of the world; yet they do not apply this, and make it their own case; but they go on even like to the brute beasts, which when they see one of their

own herd led away to the slaughter-house, regard it not; but delight as much as before in their fat pastures, sitting themselves daily more and more for the same end. So these, though they see those that were framed of the same clay with themselves, drop away, and return to their dust; yet they mind it not, unless it be for a short fit, but set their hearts upon these things, as much as if they had never heard of any that had been taken away by death. *For their inward thought is, that their Houses shall continue for ever, &c.* The Spirit of God here looketh into the inside, and rippeth open the bosomes of these earthly-minded persons, and sheweth what thoughts and hopes they have even of perpetuities here on earth: and so they love and strive for these things, as if there were eternity in them, as if they were everlasting things. *Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not, he is like the beasts that perish.* Let him enjoy never so much of these things, yet he abideth not; there shall come a change, all shall be turned upside down, and he shall become like the beasts that perish. As he is sordidly and sensually affected with things present like the beast, so he shall return to the earth like it, and be turned out of all, ver. 13. *This their way is their folly,*

yet their posterity approve their sayings. It is a sad thing, that when experience hath taught the world so often the vanity of such thoughts, yet that those that come after should be of the same mind too, think as they thought, do as they did, live as they lived. The Psalmist addeth, *Selah!*] and it is well worthy even of a note of wonder and astonishment. Children see their Parents sins, and see how they are taken away; and all their pride and coverousness, &c. doth them no good; the pleasure of all is vanished and gone; it is no more: yet will they run blindly on in the same way; so will others that come after them: Neighbours and acquaintance though they see this, yet they will follow them, and tread in their steps; this is their folly, *Selah!* it is remarkable folly. Ver. 14. *Like sheep they are laid in their grave, Death shall feed on them, &c.* As sheep dying in the field, are devoured and fed upon by Ravens, and other birds of prey and beasts of the field; so death shall not only slay them, but feed upon them, it shall consume them, and turn them into rottenness and dust. Then saith he, *The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.* After this long night wherein death shall feed on them in the grave, the morning light of that great day shall

shall arise upon them, when all shall rise again; and then the Righteousness shall have dominion over them, and sit in Judgement upon them. Oh how many changes are here which they do not effectually foresee and provide for! Friends are taken from them; they are taken from their wealth; Death killeth them, Death feedeth on them: and if here were an end, it were nothing: but then cometh that great day after this long night, when they must be awakened by the last Trumpet, and see the Righteous whom despised, sit as Judges over them. But Ver. 15. The Psalmist sheweth, how he had taken into consideration aforehand all these things, and was prepared for them. *But God will redeem my Soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me, Selah!* David did not settle his heart upon any things of the world, but he looked for death, and prepared for it, made account of being Death's prisoner in the grave; but then withall he had overcome death, and the grave before hand by the power of faith, laying hold of the promise of God, knowing that he should be ransomed and redeemed from it; not as the wicked, whose hearts were set upon the things of the world, to be carried from the prison of the grave to execution: but he

he knew, that the Lord would receive him to glory, and upon this he sets a special note again, *Selah!* Then he sheweth what little cause any child of God hath to be troubled at the outward prosperity of the wicked, and in the end concludeth all with this speech, *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.* Let him be never so highly advanced and enriched; yet if he doth not understandingly consider of changes likely to come upon him, but glut himself with the things of this present life, he is more like a beast than a man, and maketh no use of that reasonable soul which God hath given him above a beast, whereby he hath an ability to look beyond these things that lie before his eyes for the present, and to make use of his experience in those changes which he hath seen in others; applying to himself, and reasoning from one thing to another, and so to provide for the like to come upon himself. You see here the very picture of a carnal secure heart, settled upon its lees, embracing this present world, and doting upon it; not foreseeing nor providing for those many changes and turnings of things that are likely to happen, and especially that great change that shall certainly come, death, the grave, and resurrection unto Judgement. Which
were

were they throughly sensible of, they should have a low esteem of these perishing vanities, and uncertainties under the Sun, and not hazard their dear Souls by too much affecting, and too eager seeking after them.

CHAP. IV.

Use 2. **W**E are all here to be exhorted in a more serious manner to set before our eyes and hearts a more deep consideration of those changes that may befall us, and especially of that which must certainly come, and to provide against them. The Prophet *Habakkuk* saith, *I will stand upon my Watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will watch to see what the Lord will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.* He was before like one standing upon the lower ground, looking upon things present, things that lay before him, viz. The present prosperity of the wicked prevailing over the Church; and was troubled at it in his thoughts to see the wicked devour the man that was more righteous than he; Chap. i. 13. Hereupon he is tempted to complain of the Lords wayes of Providence, and his manner of governing the world. But now being sensible of his error, he would get upon the higher ground, upon a watch-tower, that he might

might see into changes that should come afterwards, and discern things afar off; when the wicked should be most severely punished for all their cruelty in oppressing the people of God. So Christians, when they stand upon the lower ground, and consult with flesh and blood, and look upon things with fleshy eyes, their thoughts are bent upon things that are at hand, even present things: but they must get upon the watch-tower, raise up their hearts in holy meditations upon the word, so that they may see afar off what is coming, and what shall be hereafter; what changes of things shall happen in time to come. When *Jehu* had the Kingdom of *Israel* bestowed upon him with a charge to execute Justice on the wicked house of *Ahab*, he rode in his Charet with other Captains & Souldiers to *Jezreel*, where *Joram* the King, and his confederate *Aba-
ziab* King of *Judah* were together, in Vers. 17. it is said, There stood a Watch upon the Tower in *Jezreel*, and he espied the Company of *Jehu* as he came; and when a Messenger was sent out and detained, he could see this too, and give the King knowledge of it: yea, and a second time he could see who it was too ere the King saw him at all (as it seemeth) standing upon the lower ground.

And

2 Kings
Chap. 9.

And the driving (saith he) is like the driving of *Jehu* the Son of *Nimshi*, for he driveth furiously. Then saith *Joram*, make ready, when he was even upon his back; But then it was too late, he was now within the reach of *Jehu's* Bow. So whiles the wicked are secure, and content themselves with present things, they foresee not dangers, miseries, death, destruction marching furiously towards them, untill it be too late, the poisoned shafts of death piercing through their hearts, and cleaving the body and soul asunder. But a Christian must be a watchman, and still stand upon his watch-tower, that he may descry changes and dangers afar off; that he may see death riding post towards him on his pale horse, *Revel. 6. 8.* and Hell following, that he may betimes provide against it, and may escape the sting of death, laying hold on Christ, and may escape the damnation of Hell. Death hath many thousands by the throat ere ever they see it coming, and arm themselves against it: They use to say of such, who when they first fell sick had the symptoms of death upon them, that they were taken with death. Beloved, every one that death surpriseth before he be provided for it, may well be said to be taken with death. Death hath taken

hold of all such, and hath them within it's power. But he that is aforehand with death, and is a partaker of life in Christ, cannot be taken with it, but he hath death rather in his power, and is a conquerour over death by the power of Christ. Others are taken unprovided; they are taken sleeping in their sins, when death driveth it's nail into their heads, as *Jael* did into the head of *Sisera*. Oh, then be watchfull to foresee and provide for changes to come! Sicknes may be coming, poverty may be coming, general calamities may be at hand; Wars may be marching furiously towards a Land; the Angel may be coming with his destroying Sword; The Arrows of Pestilence may be now laid to the Bow, and drawn to the head, and ready to fly abroad among us: Darknes may be coming, the loss of the glorious Gospel of Christ may be at hand; Anti-Christ may be coming: Howsoever these things may fall out, it is most certain, that Death is a coming not many daies journey from each of our doors, and perhaps even now ready to knock at some of our gates. None of us know, who shall be first visited by it: and they that are not provided for it aforehand may assure themselves, that Hell will follow Death close at the heels. Oh then learn to die daily

daily! that death may become familiar to you, and not come as a stranger, or an enemy, or an Executioner when it doth come; but rather as a friend, to let your Souls out of this prison of the flesh, that ye may enter into glory and blessedness.

SERMON VI.

Eccles. 2. 1. — nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

CHAP. I.

IN this last Clause of the Verse, the daies of Old Age are opposed unto the daies of Youth, in these terms, *The years wherein thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* Hence I note,

Observ. That this short and mortal life may outlast the pleasures and all the contentments of this life. This life is short, yet as short as it is, it many times is longer than the comforts of this life, longer than the delights and pleasures of this world. There may be years within the compass of this short life, wherein a man shall find no pleasure, but shall be weary of himself. Man is bur-

of short continuance; the longest lived among men shall quickly go hence; and yet many a man and woman may, and do once live the comforts of their lives; survive all the pleasure and contentment that ever they had here below. And if something remain, wherein they can take delight, yet it is so little in comparison of those things which they have lost, that they think their good daies be gone and past. They have lived to see the pleasures of life vanish away like smoak, and do often look back with sad hearts upon the times wherein they enjoyed such and such things, wherein it was thus and thus with them. So it was with *David*; he had been a victorious King, and prospered exceedingly in his wayes; but in the latter part of his life, his Daughter was deflowred by his Son, and that Son killed by another Son when he was feasting: the same Son rebelled against his Father, defiled his Concubines, sought his life, and was slain in rebellion. Then *Sheba* rebelleth, and not long after *David* lieth bed-rid, and no clothes could keep him warm, 1 *Kings* 1. Where were now the pleasures of life? might not he very well have said of these last years of his life, *I have no pleasure in them*. It is true, he did comfort himself in God, and in the assured

assured expectation of a better life, but the pleasures of this life were gone and past: and if he had been one of those that have hope only in this life, what good had all the former pleasures of this life done him? That which was verified of this good King, was true also of one of his best Subjects, viz. *Barzillai* the Gileadite, who had so liberally supplied King *David*, when he was forced to flee from *Absalom*. The King would now have him to be his Guest at the Court, and to live with him at *Jerusalem*. But thus he answereth *David*, *1 Kings 19. 35.* *I am this day fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can I taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burthen to my Lord the King?* The pleasures of this life are gone with me, saith *Barzillai*; I was wont I could relish my Meat and Drink, now I cannot: Musick now is no Musick to me, I have out-lived the delights of this world.

Now if these men did out-live the outward comforts and contentments of this life, how much more do many wicked persons? How was it with *Saul*? He was preferred beyond his expectation before all the men

of *Israel*: He overcame the *Ammonites* and *Philistines*, and was in a flourishing estate: But for his sin the Lord blasted all the comforts of his life, took away those gifts of his Spirit from him, whereby he had fitted him for the Kingdom; suffered an evil Spirit to vex and torment him; gave him over to torment himself with envy and bitterness of spirit, to vex himself with *Dauids* success; answereth him not in his distress; leaveth him to consult with a Witch, and thereupon to receive a sad answer, and so hear his doom, which soon after was executed upon him. Thus ye see in these examples how this short mortal life lasteth beyond the pleasures and comforts of this life. We have also a notable example in this kind in King *Jehoram*, a wicked Son of a good Father: He had a flourishing Kingdom left by his Father; but after that he had slain his Brethren, and wrought much wickedness, the Kingdom of *Edom* revolted from him, Ver. 9. 10. So did the City of *Libnah*. He was severely threatned from Heaven, Ver. 12, 13, 14, 15, which threatnings took effect accordingly. The *Philistines* and *Arabians* brake into his Kingdom, entred his Palace, took away his Goods, his Wives, his Sons, all save the youngest, Ver. 16, 17. Then also the Lord smote

smote him with an incurable Disease in his Bowels, and after two years torment (as it seemeth) his Body rotted, and his Bowels fell out, so that he died of sore Diseases, and had not that honour at his Funeral which was usually done unto Kings: See how his life out-lasted the comforts of his life, and yet his life was short; he died when he was about forty years old, and reigned eight years.

Now ye may see by these examples, that there are two wayes in general by which it cometh to pass; that the comforts of this life are shorter than life it self, and that this life out-lasteth them all: and that is, 1. By reason of old age. 2. By reason of crosses & afflictions. 1. In respect of old age: so it was with *David* and *Barzillai*: So it is expressed at large in this last Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*; where he sheweth how the daies of old age are such many times that a man hath no pleasure in them; and sheweth at large how the several parts of the body decay, and the powers of nature fail. The Grasshopper shall be a burthen] that is, every little thing shall trouble them. And desire shal fail.] They shall have no mind to any thing: Therefore also it must needs be that delights should fail, they should joy in nothing; all the pleasures of Youth, and the de-
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lights of Life are gone. *Moses* saith, *Psal.* 90. 10. *The daies of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore, yet is their strength but labour and sorrow.* Yea, and some ere they be threescore, do feel the burthen of Old Age, as much as others do at fourscore. 2. In respect of sufferings and afflictions, some do out-live the comforts and pleasures of this life. So did *Job*: but that afterwards the Lord restored his prosperity to him in an extraordinary manner. So *Saul* (it seemeth) in respect of age might have enjoyed many a fair year) but all was blasted, and his Kingdom did him little good. The Lord declared himself against him. So ye see in the example of *Jehoram*: the Lord may take away those comforts from a man, that the loss of them may drown all the pleasures of this life, embitter all those sweets that this world can afford to us.

CHAP. II.

THE Reason in general is the sin of man: that hath shortned life, & made it mortal, which (had it not been for sin) should have been immortal. That hath made the comforts of life shorter than life it self, which should have been everlasting, as life it self should have been immortal, had not sin given a deadly

ly wound both to the life of man, and to the comforts of this life. Man should have had no thorns nor thistles to have vexed him in Paradise, if he had not let Sin into the Garden; but Sin being let in cast him out into a thorny world full of miseries, whereby his short life was made bitter to him, and the pleasures of life not so long-lived as life it self.

Many times the special sins of men are the cause of this, and that both of God's Children and of the wicked. The special sins of the Godly, as in *David*: his sins into which he fell, made the latter part of his life full of bitterness: and had not he been able to comfort himself in God, and to have refreshed his heart with his saving love and mercy, how could he have been able to bear up his Spirit under such grievous burthens?

So the Lord doth many times change the outward condition of his Children, and causeth them in stead of many outward comforts formerly enjoyed, to eat the bread and drink the water of afflictions; and causeth sad times to pass over them; insomuch that all the comforts of this life do no way yield them so much content, as their outward afflictions do bring bitterness upon them.

On the other side, the special sins of the wicked, do sometimes move the Lord to turn their
their

their laughter into mourning, and to bring a dark Cloud on all the Sun-shine of their outward comforts, so that all things in the world shall look sad upon them, and this he seemeth to do for two causes.

1. To bring them home to himself, that being taken off from carnal contentment in outward delights, and brought to deal seriously with their own hearts, and to consider their wayes; and finding nothing in the world for their hearts to rest upon, they may be made to turn to the Lord, and to seek peace with him, and comfort in his love. Thus it was with *Manasseh*, whiles he flourished in his Kingly dignity, and had what his heart could wish, how did he exceed in wickedness? But when the Lord gave him that blow by the hand of the King of *Babylon*, which struck him down from his Throne, and laid him in fetters; then in his affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, &c. *2 Chron.* 33. 11, 12, 13.

2. The Lord seemeth to do this many times to manifest his Justice, and to let the wicked know what they are to look for in another world. Thus he seemeth to have dealt with *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, and many others. This

I am perswaded, the Lord doth often aim at even in those changes which are brought with Old Age. Many which have been flourishing in their daies, and abused their prosperity, their bodies decay with old age, and their outward means wither together with them, and they are set before the world for spectacles, wherein men may read the vanity of all things under the Sun, together with the fading and uncertain condition of all the comforts of this life. I mean of such, who after Youth and riper years spent in sin and impenitency, do afterwards go creeping under the burden of Old Age, and have no heart to seek the Lord in sincerity; but their hearts die within them, and become like *Nabals*, having lost the content which they took before in the pleasures of sin, and wanting grace to raise their hearts to the Lord, that they might delight their Souls in him. Many such examples may be observed in the world.

3. Sometimes the Lord doth this to exercise the graces of his Children, and to make them examples unto others of patience and stedfastness in his ways: as it was with *Job*, who continued in his integrity after that those great changes were brought upon him.

CHAP. III.

Use. I. **H**ENCE we may be brought to a consideration of the shortness and uncertainty of all the contentments of this present life. How short is life it self? And yet the pleasures of life are shorter than life, *Psal. 39. 5. Behold thou hast made my daies as an hand-breadth*, saith *David*. There is the life of man measured by a span: it is but an handfull long; not an Inch long compared to eternity: for so it followeth; *Mine age is as nothing before thee*. Compare it to eternity, and it is nothing. The daies of a man's life are not worth the reckoning, not worth numbring. Nay, compare it not only to the eternity of God, who is from everlasting to everlasting; but make the comparison between the time of this life, and the immortality and everlasting continuance of the Soul of man in another world either in misery or blessedness, and it is as nothing. What then are all the pleasures and contentments which this life can afford, which usually are expired before life it self? The year is but short, and quickly turned about in its several seasons: how soon is the Spring gone? How soon the Summer? The Autumn is quickly spent, and the Winter is not long ere

ere it be ended : but the pleasures of the year last not so long as the year it self. When once Winter appeareth, we may say ; where are all the flowers and Rose-buds of the Spring ? They are long since dead and withered , yet the year is not ended : within a few weeks what will become of all the green leaves that have beautified the Trees : they will fall and die. Within a few months what will become of all the green grass that cloatheth the Earth ? It will be dead , and lose its beauty and sweetness. Now unto the year ye may compare this present life : to the flowers, blossomes, leaves, grass, you may compare the pleasures , delights and contentments of this life : The year is short, and quickly gone ; yet the flowers, blossoms, leaves, &c. are gone before it. So life is short , and soon spent, yet the pleasures and contentments of this life are spent before it. In the eleventh verse of the same Psalm, *David saith , When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity , thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth : surely every man is vanity.* Thou makest his beauty, and all those delights, and that prosperity wherein he flourished, and took contentment, to consume and wither like corn that is blasted : surely every man is vanity. At the end of
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the fifth verse he saith ; *Verily, every man at his best estate is altogether vanity.* Take him at his best estate , when he hath the most of those things which belong to this life, strength and health, wit and understanding, wealth, worldly honours, credit with the world, and respect from worldly men, yet even then this holy Prophet guided by the spirit of truth, doubteth not to pronounce or proclaim him meer vanity ; an empty thing, a bubble, a bladder swoln big, but filled with wind. Take him as he is a meer man, not renewed by the Spirit of God, not having Christ dwelling in him : and take him at his best with all those things with which this mortal life is capable of, and wherewith this lower world wherein we live, can furnish him, and he is but vanity ; there is nothing sound, nothing solid nor substantial in him : his life and the pleasures of this life are but for a moment, and of the two the pleasures of this life usually are the shorter, and sooner ended than life itself. The Apostle saith, *1 Pet. 1. 24. All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away.* Man and his mortal life are like the grass : the glory and prosperity of man's life is as the flower of the grass. The grass it self is not long-lived,
but

but the flower of the graſs is dead before the graſs it ſelf. Life is not long, but the flower of life, the pleaſure and proſperity of life is ſhorter than life it ſelf, *Jam. 4. 14. What is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away.* Where the Apoſtle meeteth with the fond thoughts of our fleſhly hearts: for when a man is ſtrong and healthy, and in proſperity, and enjoyeth the pleaſures of this life, he thinketh he hath gotten a jewel, and his heart reſteth in theſe things, he thinketh it is well with him: Oh this life, and that which belongeth to it, is a thing which he doth highly prize, and ſetteth a great rate upon it. Now ſaith St. James, *What is your life?* Ye think ye have a great treaſure of it, I pray what is it? What is that life which ye do ſo highly eſteem? I will tell you ſaith he, it is even a vapour that appeareth: it hath rather an appearance than a being. It maketh ſome ſhew in the eyes of the world, but it is nothing in a manner; and that ſhew and appearance which it maketh, is but for a time, & when the time is gone, it is as if it had never been; it is all loſt, man is never the better for it; for thoſe things which are limited within the compaſs of time, and meaſured by a term of daies or years, both in reſpect of themſelves
and

and their fruit, all the good of them weareth out with that time, and he that enjoyed them, is never the better for them, no more than if he had never had them. I speak of those things which in themselves and in their fruit are measured by time; for some things in respect of themselves, and their continuance, are but for a time; but the fruit of them is everlasting to those that use them in an holy & sanctified manner, to those who receive the truth in love into honest and good hearts, in whom it becometh an immortal seed, enlivened and actuated with the Spirit of life and holiness; yea, there are some principal graces, which end with time in respect of themselves, but in respect of their fruit are everlasting, as Faith and Hope which cease with this life, but in their fruit are perpetua and immortal. Nay, even many outward things in the possession of a Child of God, being sanctified to him, and improved by him to the glory of God, though they are mortal and temporal in themselves, yet they have an everlasting fruit; so that a Child of God that is rich in good works, may be the better for his wealth for ever. The Psalmist speaking of him that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his Commandements, speaketh of his wealth and riches, *Psal.* 112. 3. and ver. 9. of the
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good use of them. *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor:* and then of the everlasting fruit of wealth so employed with such an heart; he saith, *His righteousness endureth for ever.* So *Matth. 6.20.* saith our Saviour: *Lay up for your selves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break thorow, nor steal.* But now to an unregenerate man, both his life it self, and all the good he enjoyeth in this life, and all the fruit of that life, and that good is temporal, and limited by time. All his pleasures, and prosperity, and all the fruit of these end with time; and so when the time is past, and these do him no good, he is never the better for them, no more than if he had never possessed them. Take two natural men living and dying in that estate; the one rich, and the other a stark beggar: the rich man's case is not a jot better, when the time of this life is worn out, than the others; it may be worse because of his unthankfulness, and the abuse of his wealth. So take a natural man that hath enjoyed abundance of pleasures, and another that hath scarce seen any good daies all his life long; if both of them live and die in their natural estate, they are both alike: the pleasures that the one hath had, do him no more good, than if he

had never had any more than the other: It may be they have increased his condemnation exceedingly. Now St. James saith, that life is but for a time, or rather it appeareth but for a time: so the pleasures of life are but for a time; nay, it followeth there, life appeareth but for a little time; and the pleasures of life are shorter than life; and therefore their time is less than life, and then saith he, life vanisheth away, and the pleasures of life must needs vanish with it, in e's they be gone before it, as many times they are: for as ye see in the Text, a man may live such years, whereof he may say and think, I have no pleasure in them: wherein he may say, in his heart, Alas! I breath yet, I keep above ground, I yet live, but I have out-lived all the comforts of my life, they are as it were dead and buried; I shall never enjoy them any more: so that he can look back upon his former comforts and prosperity with a sad heart, and weeping eye, comparing it with his present sorrows, as Job did, as ye may read at large in the 29th. and 30th. Chapters of that Book. In the 29th. he expresseth his former prosperity, in the 30th. his present affliction. In Chap. 29.2. he saith, *Oh that I were as in months past, as in the daies wherein God preserved me; when*

his candle shined upon mine head, and when by his light, I walked through darkness! So he goeth on. Even so man liveth to that day, when he can reckon up a great many comforts as so many losses: things once enjoyed, now gone, and can compare them with many crosses now lying upon them: for sometimes the Lord taketh away mens wealth, so that those who have lived plentifully, are brought to a poor and hard condition: sometimes their health, that men are afflicted with languishing or painful diseases, that their wealth doth them little good; they cannot enjoy it. Sometimes he leaveth them health and wealth, but taketh away those friends that are dearer to them than either: the loss of whom embittereth all those things that are left them. Sometimes he depriveth them of liberty, and these things come alike to all; sometimes he prolongeth their lives unto old age, and burtheneth their old age with so many infirmities and grievances, that their life is but a lingring death unto them. Sometimes he taketh away their sight, sometimes their hearing. &c. and sometimes he leaveth them to the gnawings and gripings of a guilty conscience, not cleansed and washed by the blood of Christ. Thus many wayes, and in many respects ye see, that the

pleasures and prosperity of life may be made shorter than this short life it self.

C H A P. IV.

II. **I**N the second place this should serve to wean us from the love of this world, and the things of this life, whether it be wealth, or pleasure, or worldly credit, or health or strength, or friends or children that we set our hearts upon, or take content in: how soon may all, or any of these be taken from us? or how soon may some such heavy blow from the hand of the Lord fall upon us, as may strike dead all the delight and comfort which we took in these? Therefore as the Prophet saith, *Isai. 2.22. Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Cease to put your trust, or place your content in man, whether men of high degree, or of low degree, for he is a mortal creature, soon gone. When that fading fleeting breath that issueth in and out at his nostrils, is stopped by death, he is gone: and *wherein is he to be accounted of?* What reckoning should be made of so frail a creature? So in this case I say, cease ye from the things of this life, for they have their breath in their nostrils (as it were) they are frail, short-lived comforts; and wherein are they to be accounted of? Here then

then is Christian wisdom to have the heart crucified to these things when they are at best, and when a man hath most of them: then to die to the world, and to look upon the best things of the world, and the greatest outward comforts of this life as upon so many dead things: to affect them, and make account of them as so many shadows and empty vanities to use them as dying things. *I am crucified to the world* (saith the Apostle) *and the world is crucified to me.* This is Christian wisdom when a man can so carry his affections towards the greatest comforts of this life, as he would to a thing that is crucified, to a thing already nailed to the cross, and dying. It were a vain thing to take a few flowers and blossoms in the Spring, and to lock them up safe in a Cabinet, like so many precious Stones, or Pearls of great value, meaning to keep them many years: whereas if he look upon them the next week, he shall find them dead and withered, their beauty is gone. And is it not yet a far greater folly to lock up the fading comforts of this life in that precious Cabinet of thy Heart and Soul, as as if they were everlasting treasures, as if they were some enduring substance? such a heart is poorly furnished. For an immortal Soul that must live for ever, to be stuffed and

filled with perishing trash, it is as if a rich Cabinet of Gold, beset with Pearls, should be fill'd with dust and dross; yea, it is far worse, such a soul is miserably furnished; when the Soul wherein Christ should dwell, the Soul which should be a Temple of the Holy Ghost, the Soul that should be stored and furnished with heavenly graces, shall be stuffed and filled with such rubbish and trash as men gather from the dunghill of this world, with the things of this life, that are shorter than life it self. So St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. *This I say Brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none: and they that weep, as though they wept not: and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not: and they that buy, as though they possessed not: and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. It is alwayes in fluxu, still in passage, ever fleeing, going, vanishing. Therefore go not about to keep that in thine immortal Soul, which will not be kept, which will not abide with thee, but will suddenly be gone, and is already going, and sliding from thee: but we shall never be beaten from this, unless we take possession of better things, and lay hold on the enduring substance.*

B

PIOUS
FATHERS.
the Glory of
CHILDREN.
AND GODLY
CHILDREN
the Glory of
FATHERS.

By WILLIAM GEARING,
Minister of the Word.

Maxima debetur pueri reverentia. Juvenal.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Tho: nas Parkhurst, 1663.

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Pious Fathers, the Glory of Children, &c.

Proverbs, 17. 6. *Childrens Children are the Crown of old men, and the Glory of Children are their Fathers.*

CHAP. I.

THE *Proverbs* are like Manna scattered upon the ground by *Solomon*, which his Servants gathered up, and put into the Pot for the benefit of Gods people. It is labour in vain to seek the dependance of them one upon another; for they do not (like *Jacob* and *Esau*) catch one another by the heel. The Text therefore being an independent Proposition, I will first open the words, then draw some doctrinal conclusions from them.

Children.] To have Children, is every way in Scripture commended for a great blessing, *Psal. 127. 3. Lo, Children are an Heritage*

Heritage of the Lord, &c.] Lo, being prefixed, implyeth, that a numerous posterity is an admirable blessing. Worldlings look upon many Children as a great Charge, not as a temporal blessing. *Children are an Heritage of the Lord.* Implying they do descend from God, as an Inheritance from the Father to the Child. The word implyeth a free gracious blessing.

Childrens Children] Here is blessing upon blessing. That thou art a Father of a Child is a blessing: and that thy Child is a Father of Children is a superadded blessing. This was the blessing of *Rebecca* by her friends at her departure. *Grow into thousand thousands,* Gen. 24. 60. *Blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of Children,* saith the Psalmist. When the Lord would shew the manner of his blessing to the Jews after their return from captivity, he thus describes it. *The streets of the City shall be full of Boyes and Girls,* Zech. 8. 5. It is not only a reward and blessing to the rich to be full of Children, but it is specified as a blessing upon the poor; that the Lord will make him *a family like a flock of sheep,* Psal. 107. 41.

Are the Crown of old men.] That is, it is the honour of old men: or, posterity is a crown of honour. Then the 3d generation is a treble Crown

Crown of honour. *Joseph* saw *Ephraim's* Children, of the third generation: the Children also of *Machir*, the Son of *Manasseh*, were born upon *Joseph's* knees, *Gen.* 50. 23. Of the Lord's blessing the last daies of *Job* more than the first; it is said that *Job* had seven Sons, and three Daughters; and that after this *Job* lived an hundred and forty years, and saw his Sons, and his Son's Sons, even four generations, *Job* 42. 13, 16.

And the glory of Children are their Fathers. As the Children are the ornament and honour of old age: so the aged Fathers are to be an honour of their dear Posterity. Honour descendeth from Father to Children, and ascendeth from Children to Fathers.

CH A P. II.

Obs. **H**ERE we may observe that Fathers are, and ought to be the honour and glory of their Children. Or, Fathers ought so to live, that they may be the glory of their Children. I shall only insist upon the last clause of my Text. *The glory of Children are their Fathers.* Children are not alwayes the glory of old men, no] foolish Children, of the Tribe of *Belial*, a riotous, drunken, wanron, blasphemous, and irreligious posterity; or Children are a reproach to their Fathers.

ther, and a shame to their Mother: such crosses as do embitter all their worldly comforts, and bring down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Therefore the words are not to be understood *de πολυπαιδία*, of a numerous posterity, of having many Children: for the more wicked Children men have, the greater reproach and sorrow. Neither are the words to be understood *de καλλοπαιδία*, of fair, comely, witty Children: for though these be outward ornaments, yet they may be wantons, drunkards, very fools, and so a reproach to their Fathers. *Absalom* was a fair and proper man, but *David's* heavy cross. *Esaú* was a strong man, but *Isaac's* cross; the Spirit of God calleth him *profane Esaú*, *Hebr.* 12. But the words are meant *de pia posteritate*, of a godly posterity, of pious and religious Children: they, and only they are the glory of old men, the joy, hope, comfort, and support of their aged Parents. Such Children are called Olive Plants and Arrows: Olive branches for cheerfulness, and Arrows for strength and protection. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate*, *Psal.* 127. 4, 5.

So again, the words are not to be taken for all Fathers, for there are Fathers that be
disparage-

disparagements, a shame, a reproach to their Children, Atheistical, drunken, blasphemous, adulterous, oppressing Fathers are the stinking reproaches of their surviving posterity; they are not the glory of their Children: so the words are not to be meant of their descent. Many glory, that they are descended of such a noble and honourable Stock, from such wealthy or ancient Families. It is an extrinsecal honour and priviledge, and indeed it is the great *Diana* of the world. But this is nothing, if their Fathers were drunkards, whoremongers, blasphemers, persecutors, hereticks; these foul vices (like the Plague of Leprosie in the wall) make such extrinsecal priviledges to be vile and base. As it was said of *Naaman* the Syrian, Captain of the Host of the King of Syria, that he was *a great man with his master, and honourable, he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a Lepper*, 2 Kings 5. 1. So for any one to say, that such a Gentleman's Father was a drunkard, or a swearer, or an ungodly man, or the like; is a reproach, and no honour to his posterity. But it is meant of godly, wise, religious Fathers, they are a glory of their Children.

CHAP. III.

Godly Fathers are said to be a glory of their Children in these following respects.

I. Their very graces are their own and their Childrens glory, *Prov. 16. 31. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.* Their very silver hairs are their crowns. It behooveth the young to reverence them for their age. Hoary hair is a Crown set upon the heads of godly men by God himself, therefore we ought to reverence them. Then are their silver hairs true crowns of glory, when they are found in a way of righteousness. Grace is the Crown of old age. The holiness, heavenly-mindedness, gracious counsels, pious instructions, and godly conversations of aged persons, winneth honour and reverence. To see aged men to be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience: and the aged women likewise to be in behaviour as becometh holy women, to be teachers of good things, to be discreet, chaste, &c. this is a Crown of glory to them. Otherwise, though men and women live long, and are found in the way of sin, they are a cursed people, *Isai. 65. 20. The sinner being an hundred years old, shall be a. cursed.*

accursed. An old drunkard, an old swearer, an old whoremonger, an old profane worldling is a wicked wretch. *Diogenes* being asked, what was the saddest spectacle in the world, answered, an old man in misery. But an old man in misery, is not so vile an object, as an old man in his sins. To see an old man drunk; to hear oaths, curses, revilings, ribaudry, come from the mouths of aged persons, is a most lamentable thing. Poor wretches! they lie under the evil of Age which is burdensom; and they have the evil of Sin upon them, which is intolerable; and may daily expect, when their gray hairs shall be brought down with sorrow to the grave, yea, to the pit of Hell.

II. It is Children's glory, that they are descended from such gracious and aged Parents. We see how the world esteemeth of descent from men of noble birth, from ancient Stocks and Families. But this is nothing, if Children do degenerate from their generous and noble Ancestors. In this respect, if any glory be due, it is due to the Parents, not to the Children, unless they tread in the steps of their worthy Parents: which gave occasion to *Cicero*, to reprehend *Cateline*, by comparing the antiquity of his blood, with the viciousness of his manners; who saith of him, That he

was

was not more famous by the Nobility of his Parents, than ignominious by his own notorious Vices. It is a vanity for men to derive their Pedigrees from antient Houses, and to carry themselves unworthy such Ancestors: surely the Nobility and goodness of their Progenitors cannot so much credit them, as their own badness and wickedness will discredit them: But if nobility of blood be joyned with grace and vertue, it is highly to be esteemed. Now if men account it an honour to them to be nobly descended: surely much greater honour it is to descend from godly Parents; grace and godliness being much better than all outward wealth, riches, honour and greatness. This was the glory and boast of the Children of Israel, that they had *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, for their Fathers. *We have Abraham to be our Father*, said the Jews, *Matth. 3: 9. Our Father Jacob.*] said the woman of Samaria, *Job. 4. 12.* and *St. Paul* speaking of the priviledges of the Jews, puts in this for a great priviledge, *Rom. 9. 5. Of whom are the Fathers.* So it is the glory and crown of Children, when they have believing Fathers; when it can be said of them, as of our Saviour, *Who was the Son of Enos, which was the Son of Seth, which was the Son of Adam, which was the Son of God, Luk. 3.*

38. So it is spoken to the honour of such a Child, when it is said, He is the Son of such a godly Father, and such a godly Mother; who were, and are the Sons and Daughters of God. *Solomon* sets it down as an honour to him, that he was the Son of *David*, *Prov.* 1. 1. The Proverbs of *Solomon*, the Son of *David*, King of *Israel*. It might well be an honour to *Solomon* to have the Title, which was afterwards given to *Jesus Christ*, *Mat.* 1. 1. It was an honour to young *Timothy*, that the unfeigned Faith that was in him, dwelt first in his Grand-Mother *Lois*, and in his Mother *Eunice*, *2 Tim.* 1. 5.

III. It is their glory and Crown, in that they can glory in this, that God was, and is the Father of their Fathers. It is a frequent title in Scripture given to God [*The God of our Fathers.*] It is that wherein the faithful boast. *Except the God of my Father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me*, saith *Jacob* to *Laban*: that is, that God whom his Father *Isaac* feared, or worshipped, *Genes.* 31. 42. God himself glorieth in this title. *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Israel.* The Lord appeared unto *Isaac* at *Beer-sheba*, and said, *I am the God of Abraham thy Father*, *Genes.* 26. 24. So the Lord said unto *Jacob*,

cob, I am God, the God of thy Father, Genes.

46. 3. So the Lord said unto *Moses, I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, Exod.*

3. 6. And when he sent *Moses* to the Children of *Israel*, he said unto him, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of *Israel*, *The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you. This is my Name for ever, and my Memorial unto all Generations,*

ver. 15. This is a memorial of my faithfulness, of my truth and constancy in my promises made with your Fathers, that all succeeding Generations may see, and acknowledge me to be a God keeping Truth and Covenant for ever. The glorious God is not ashamed to be called the Father of his people; neither is Christ ashamed to be called their Brother. Now that their believing Parents are thus allyed to God, to Jesus Christ, to all the company of Angels and Saints, what an honour and crown of glory is this unto the Children?

IV. The Parents being in Covenant, maketh their Children holy, this is a glory to their Children. 1 Cor. 7. 14. because they come of a believing Parent, they are federally holy; for God covenanteth with be-
 lieving

believing Parents, that he will be the God of them, and of their seed. So the Apostle, *Rom. 7. 16.* If the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. The Apostle proveth there, that the Children of believing Parents are within the Covenant of God; because the Parents, the Children too. Therefore that the seed of the Jews are not finally rejected, for they be the seed of faithfull *Abraham*, they spring from that holy root. That which he made an Argument for the Children of faithful *Abraham*, is a good Argument for the Children of all faithfull Parents. The Parents being within the Covenant, so are the Children: for the Children are as the branches, the Parents as the root: Children as the lump, Parents as the first-fruits. It is the ground why Christian Parents bring their Children to Baptisme, to receive the Seal of the Covenant, because the Children are comprehended in that Covenant, *Act. 2. 38, 39.* Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, &c. (saith Peter to his hearers) for the Promise is to you, and unto your Children. God owneth such for his people, for his Sons and Daughters, who are in Covenant with him. Other people are called by the name of that

Idol-god which they worshipped; as the *Moabites*. were called the people of *Chemosh*, because they worshipped an Idol so called, *Jerem.* 48. 46. So likewise the *Ammonites* are called the people of *Milcom*, because they worshipped an Idol so called. And *Euripides* calleth the *Athenians* the people of *Minerva*, because they worshipped that Goddess: by this you may gather that those whom God owns for his people, are in Covenant; for to be the people of God is a Covenant-stile: and this the Children of all believing Parents are.

V. Godly Parents are a glory and honour to their Children, in that for their sakes the blessing of the Lord falls upon their Children, *Prov.* 20. 7. *The just man walketh in his integrity, his Children are blessed after him.* The Hebrew word denoteth one that walketh in all godliness constantly to the end, *ITVS beatitudes*, blessings shall be upon his Children. God hath graciously promised, that he will shew mercy to thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments. What a motive should this be to Parents, to stir up Parents to labour after godliness. Ye would have your Children to be rich, and many men do adventure the loss of their immortal Souls to advance their posterity,

Herity, now the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it. God doth sometimes divert his anger from the Children of Godly Parents, and give them special mercies. It is a frequent passage in Scripture, nevertheless for my servant David's sake, &c. So God saith of Solomon, *I will make him Prince all the daies of my life, for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, &c.* 1. Kings 10. 34. So in the daies of Abijam, it is said, *Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a Lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his Son after him, and to establish Jerusalem, 1 Kings 15. 4.* God often saith, that he remembreth the Covenant that he made with their Fathers, to shew how faithfull God is in his promises to his believing servants

VI. It is a glory to a Child, that his Father dies a servant of the Lord: his death is precious in the sight of the Lord, and in the sight of man. It is the highest commendation that can be given of any one, that he died the servant of the Lord, *Moses my servant is dead*, said God to Josua, Jos. 1. 2. Such a one is dead that was the servant of the Lord, what greater commendation than this can be given to any? Worldlings will say, such a one died worth so many hundreds by

the year, worth so many thousands of pounds; poor creatures ! did not the fool in the Gospel die rich? Did not the glutton die rich? What commendation is it to say of such a one, he was rich, but a glutton, a fool, an adulterer, an oppressour, a covetous unjust dealer? What honour is this to the Children of such a man enjoying his wealth and riches? And as his death is precious, so the memorial of a good man after his death is precious. *The memory of the just shall endure, but the name of the wicked shall rot.*

CHAP. IV.

IN the next place I shall also shew, how Children are the glory of their Fathers.

I. Their filial obedience to their just and lawful commands is an honor to their Parents. Therefore in the fifth Commandement it is said, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, that is, out of reverential obedience to them. Sr. Paul saith, Eph. 6. 2. *That it is the first Commandement with promise.* But it may be said, Is not the second Commandement with promise? The answer is two-fold. There is a double Commandement, affirmative, and negative: This is the first affirmative Commandement: or rather, it is the first Commandement in the second Table, to shew, that

that next after the care of Religion, our duty to Parents must be regarded. *Aristotle* could say, God and Parents cannot be sufficiently requited. The Heathen punished injuries to God, and Parents alike. *Valer. lib. 1. Qui dubitat utrum oporteat Deos revereri, aut Parentes, non indiget ratione, sed pari pœnâ.* *Arist. Topic. lib. 8.* He that doubteth whether God or Parents be to be revered, needs not to be confuted by reason, but by the same punishment. Now stubbornness in a Child is a reproach to his Father. *Who so keepeth the law, is a wise Son, but he that is a companion of riotous men, shameth his Father, Prov. 28. 7.* God ordained a Law, that such Children should be stoned to death, and the Parents should be the first that should throw a stone upon them, to shew, how hainous a sin stubbornness is in Children, *Deut. 21. 20, 21.* The sins of Riot and Drunkenness were not by *Moses's* Law punishable by death: this punishment therefore was inflicted upon a riotous Son, in respect of his disobedience to his Parents, which greatly aggravated his sin, and for which he was to die, when other Drunkards escaped with lighter punishment. The *Rechabites* were

Diis & Parentibus nunquam satis fit.
Aristot.

an honour to their Father, in that they kept the Commandement of *Jonadab*, the Son of *Rechab* their Father.

II. When they shall give pliable attention to the godly instructions, and admonitions of their Fathers. *A wise Son keareth the instructions of his Father; but a scorner beareth not rebuke*, Prov. 13. 1. It is an high point of folly and contempt when the Father is wisely charming, and the Son stoppeth his ear against the voice of the charmer, *Hear ye Children the instruction of a Father, and attend to know understanding*, Prov. 4. 1. Children are sluggish, & had need to be often called upon to hearken to pious instruction,

None can be more faithfull to
Gregor. Epist. lib. 1. give counsel to thee, than he that loveth not thine, but thee,
 saith *Gregory*. Such indeed are Parents & therefore most worthy to be heard. Godly Parents take care of their own Souls, and therefore will not neglect the Souls of their Children. Therefore saith *Gregory*, *Committite animam diligentibus suam*, commit thy Soul to them that love their own. Let not Children slight the sharp rebukes of faithfull Parents, seeing it is for the good of their S. uir. *Quem enim ferret, patrem si non ferret suum? Trent.* For whom should

a Child bear withall, if not with his own Father?

III. When Children walk in the holy steps of their godly Parents, and are followers of them, as they are of Christ. Such a one is an honour, and no shame to his Father. There cannot be a better resemblance between a Child and a Father, than this spiritual resemblance in that which is good. This was ever the praise, or ignominious brand of the Kings of *Israel*, That those that were godly, they did walk after the Lord, as did *David* their Father: or who walked in the way of *Jeroboam*, who made *Israel* to sin. So it is the high commendation of a Son, when it shall be said, he walketh in the same holy religious course, as did, as doth his Father. It is the reproach of both, when as they say of a Child, that he is a drunkard, or a swearer, his Father was so before him. How doth *St. John* honour the elect Lady in his Epistle to her, with a praiseful memorial, 2 Epist. Joh. 4. *I rejoyced greatly, that I found of thy Children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.*

IV. A wise Son is an honour to a godly Father. *A wise Son maketh a glad Father,* Prov. 10. 1. So in Prov. 23. 15. *My Son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoyce,*
even

even mine. Such a Son is an honour to his Father while he liveth. *My Son be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me,* Prov. 27. 11. Men desire to leave memorials behind them: a wise and godly Son is a better Monument of a Father, than a stately Pallace left behind him. *Abalom* having no Son, he built him a Pillar, to keep his Name in remembrance, 2 Sam. 18. 18. A grave Divine tells us of an ancient Minister of good note in this Nation, who being unmarried himself, reasoned with a married Gentlewoman about the best Estate of the two, pleading his great freedom from family cares, and for his studies: She calleth a Child of hers, and catechizeth him before the Minister. Now Sir (said she) you had need serve God while you live, for he shall get no glory by you in this world when you are dead. This Child may honour God, when I am dead and gone, and others that may come from him to the worlds end. Godly Children, as they are an honour and comfort to their Parents while they live, so they honour the memory of their Parents, when they are dead. But as for foolish and wicked Children, they are like Peacocks, which uncover the house where they roost, or the Ivy, that pulls down the wall that holds it up.

V. Parents and Children, will be mutual crowns and glory to each other at the day of Judgement. When the Father shall present his godly Children before Christ, Lord, here are the Children whom thou hast given me; blessing and praising God for them; how will the Children bless God for such a Father, and bless the Father for his example, and pious instructions.

CHAP. V.

Use. I. **T**His may serve for a just reproof of those Fathers, who live in swearing, whoredom, drunkenness, oppression, and so are a shame and reproach to their Children: and regard not, though their Sons likewise to their shame and reproach, be a stinking generation and family, walking in their sins. *Diogenes*, when he saw a young man drunk, said, the reason was, because his Father begat him when he was drunk. In like manner when he saw a young man bearing his Father, he said, he doth it because his Father did neglect his duty to him in bringing him up. The wicked lives and dissolute conversations of Fathers, is the cause of their Sons wickedness. Hearken to me all ye Parents, let me demand of you; Are not ye the propagators of original sin to your Children,

dren, which maketh them Children of wrath, and heirs of damnation? Will not ye rest there, but must you needs by your wicked and licentious conversacion make them twofold more the Children of Hell, Hast not thou sins enough to answer for? but thou must have their sins upon thy score too? Ye wicked Parents, that sin in the sight of your Children, you draw them to sin as you do: a Parents sin committed in the sight of a Child, is a double sin. It is said of a corrupt generation, Hos. 2. 3, 4. *Their Mother plaid the Harlot, and they are the Children of whoredoms.* The Holy Ghost seemeth to give in this as the reason why the Children are the Children of whoredoms, viz. Because their Mother plaid the Harlot: so that there was a succession of wickedness among them. Take heed therefore O ye Parents, of breathing infection upon your Children, to make them like your selves in wickedness, and the guilt of your sins, and to bring them to partake of God's Judgements together with your selves. The *Switzers* foresaw this, who enacted a Law, that if a Child were condemned to die, the Father should execute him; because that usually the neglect and evil carriage of Parents, is the fountain of all misery and wickedness in their Children.

Oh, what cruel Parents are they to their Children ! that will lie, swear, curse, in the hearing of their Children, that will teach them to lie, to game, to steal, to use deceit, to break the Sabbath, as if they would have them to learn the Devils Catechism without book ? Thou that art a Father of Children , consider thou, that at the resurrection day , thy Children, whose damnation thou didst further by thy wicked example , will curse thee to thy face. Cursed be that Father that begat me, and the Womb that bare me , and the Paps that gave me suck : Oh ! that there had been news brought to my Father, that a Toad , or a Snake had been born to him , when it was said, there is a man-child born. Then will the Son cry out in Hell-torments, I had never come into this place of torment , had not my Father been ; had he given me good instruction , a good example , I had not been cast into this dark dungeon. I learnt to curse and blaspheme from that cursed blasphemous Father. I learn'd to be drunk from that drunken Father. I learn'd to mock at piety and holiness, to scoff at the wayes and people of God, of that scoffing Father. I learn'd to prophane the Sabbath, I neglected Prayer in my family , I neglected the hearing of the Word , for my Father did so before me : he
was

was an Atheist, and so was I. Oh, that I had been his curriſh Dog, his filthy Hog, rather than his beloved Son. As they in *Rome* ſaid of *Nero*, becauſe of his cruelty, it were better be *Nero's* Hog than his Son. Oh, how will ſuch Children be ready to caſt fire-brands in the faces of ſuch wicked Parents, when they are in Hell-flames together.

CHAP. VI.

II. This may reprove thoſe Parents, who labour more to make their Children rich, great, glorious in the eye of the world, than to make them gracious and glorious in the eye of God; who care not by what unjuſt means they ſcrape their wealth together, to leave beſind them a rich poſterity, and care not that their Children be enriched with grace; that drown themſelves in perdition and deſtruction, for their Childrens greatness in the world. *Salvian* hath an excellent Me-

*Benis ſuis aliis preparat
beatitudinem, ſibi miſe-
riam; aliis gaudia, ſibi
lachrymas; aliis volup-
tatem brevem, ſibi ig-
nem perpetuum.* *Salvian.*

itation upon the rich man in the Goſpel, that laid up much riches together. With his goods (ſaith *Salvian*) he prepareth happineſs for others, miſery for himſelf: mirth and jollity for others, tears and ſorrow for himſelf; a ſhort pleaſure for others,

others, everlasting torment for himself. His heirs that possessed his wealth and substance, did game, take their ease, eat, drink, and were merry: and this poor covetous wretch was howling and roaring, weeping and wailing in Hell. Oh, what fools are those Parents, that labour more for temporal riches for their Children, than for grace and godliness! God usually crosseth such Parents in their plots and purposes: their Children after them usually do prodigally spend that wealth which the Parents wickedly scraped together: and the Parents are tormented in Hell, whiles their prodigal Children are merry and jovial upon earth: Graceless Children are drinking and gaming and drabbing, spending their daies in mirth and pleasure, whiles the wretched covetous Father is howling, roaring, and tormented in Hell. Now if thy everlasting confusion, be either thine, or thy Childrens glory, much good may it do thee. Such Parents are the most deadly enemies their to own Children. Many wicked men (like *Ahab*) kill, and take possession of the Vineyards and Inheritances of poor Innocents, and settle them upon their Children, as firm as Law can make them, to them and to their Heirs for ever: But after all this, if such Parents would but cast up their Bargains,

gains, they would see, they had damned themselves to enrich their Children: and enriched their Children to undo them: they had brought the curse of God upon their own Souls, to leave their Children that, which should undo them and theirs. How politick was *Jeroboam* to entail the Kingdom of Israel to his own line! and therefore sets up two golden Calves, the one at *Dan*, the other at *Bethel*, to hinder the people from going up to *Jerusalem* to worship, where King *Rehobaham* was. But that very course of his, by making Israel to sin, was the ruine of him and his house. The Lord swept away the remnant of his house, as a man sweepeth away dung, till all be gone, *1 Kings* 14. 16.

Ye that are Parents, ye can love your selves in your own persons, and in the images of your nature, and in those that are the supports of your families, the Children which God hath given you. Therefore when you commit great sins, or leave great estates to your Children wickedly gotten, what do ye but represent the future estate of your Children, and as it were slay them with your own inhumane and barbarous hands! Oh, how vile a person is that Father or Mother, who for a little money gotten by usury, extortion, or oppression, will leave an Estate to their Children

Children, and the curse of God with it, and become parricides, and embroe their hands in the blood and ruine of their own Children! Many men think no course amiss, so they may set their nests on high, and make their seed great on earth, *Habbak. 2. 9.* But in this they are utterly deceived, for this is the very next way to bring the curse of God upon their Children. How often is that snatch'd away by others, which men provided for their own Children, and that of *Solomon* is verified. *The Riches of the sinner is laid up for the just*, *Prov. 13. 22.* Thus the Estate of *Haman* was given unto *Mordecai*. *Solomon* speaking of an oppressour, saith, *That he begets a Son in whose hand is nothing*, *Eccles. 5. 14.* *Wo be to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house.* There hangs a judgement over the heads of the Children, for the Fathers covetousness, as rain in the clouds, which perhaps in their Sons, or in their Grand-childrens dayes may come down as a mighty flood upon their House, *Habak. 2. 9.* *Thou hast consulted shame to thine own house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy Soul: for the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the Timber shall answer thee, ver. 10.* Such Parents are no glory of their Children.

Use II. **L**et this serve therefore for exhortation to Parents, when they have ridings that a Child is born unto them; Take the mercy, but remember your duty, lest this or that Child be not one day thy greatest shame and reproach, which is at present thy joy and comfort, for according to thy fatherly duties, so will thy comfort, or thy sorrows be. Do ye desire your Children may be your joy, and not your sorrows; your glory and crown, and not your reproach and shame, then walk wisely towards them, and before them: be thou a glory to them, so may they prove thy glory and crown. Now that you and they may be crowns and honours to each other, consider these following duties.

I. Give a good example of an holy life to your Children: be frequent in the exercise of holy duties and graces before them. Thus *David* did, *Psal.* 101. 2. He would

*Let thy little Children
keep thee from sin, said
the Poet Juvenal.*

walk within his house with a perfect heart, and behave himself wisely in a perfect way: that is

godly, in a perfect way of godliness before his Children and Servants. Examples of Parents have a strong influence into the manners of

that

their Children. Personal sins are usually derived from Parents to Children by their bad lives: for a Father to lie, to swear, to be drunk, to neglect holy duties, this hath a great influence upon the Children. A Son may inherit the Father's sin by imitation, by following his example, and doing the same sin, and the proverb is, The young birds will do, as they see the old ones do before them. We read that more than forty Children were destroyed by two she-bears for mocking the Prophet *Elisha*, 2 *Kings* 2. 23, 24. One hath this Query upon it, Why did the Prophet call for revenge upon the Children, who scarce understood what they did, much less did act any thing upon design? He answereth;

Martyr in 2 Reg. cap. 2. Though we might suppose that they were of such a tender age, that they were ignorant of the evil of this action, yet having learn'd this from their Parents, God sent this judgement upon them to punish the Children and the Parents at once: for doubtless they had learn'd that mocking Language from their Parents, at least by hearing them say so to the Prophet *Elisha*, Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head, if they had not taught them to say so. Which scoff they cast upon

Elisha, in allusion to the rapture, or carrying up of *Elijah* to Heaven. As if they had said, Go thou up also to Heaven as *Elijah* did, that we may be rid of thee, as we are of him. Children are apt to imitate their Parents in every thing, and are best at imitating them in the worst. It is written of *Jeroboam*, that he caused Israel to sin; so it may be spoken of wicked Parents, that they cause their Children to sin. It is said of *Abijah* the Son of *Rehoboam*, that he walked in all the sins of his Father, which he had done before him; *1 Kings* 15. 3. Ye that give all examples to your Children, you shall answer both for your own sins, and the sins of your Children, occasioned by your bad example.

II. Ye that are Parents, be often dehorting your Children from sin and vain company. The Book of the Proverbs is full of such pious dehortations. *My Son*, saith *Solomon*, enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men, avoid it, pass by it, turn from it, and pass away. What most affectionate dehortation is that of *Solomon's* Mother unto him, *Prov.* 31. 2. *What, my Son! and what, the Son of my womb! and what, the Son of my vows! Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to the which destroyeth Kings. It is not for Kings*

O Lemuel, to drink wine, nor for Princes strong drink, lest they drink, and forget the Law, and pervert the judgement of any of the afflicted, ver. 3, 4, 5. Parents should often tell their Children, that such and such ungodly courses will be their reproach; bring down the gray hairs of their Parents with sorrow to the grave, and their own Souls down into the pit of everlasting destruction.

III. Instruct them in the worship, word, and way of God and godliness, ye Fathers, bring up your Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, *Eph. 6. 4*, in the nurture, ἐν παιδείᾳ, it signifies it the Childhood. *Beza* renders it in the doctrine of the Lord: and ἐν νουθεσίᾳ, that is, in admonition drawn from the word of God. *Henoch* had his name, as one taught from his Youth, and consecrate unto God. God commanded his people, *Deut. 6, 7*. *Thou shalt rehearse these words continually unto thy Children.* The word is, Thou shalt whet them continually upon thy Children: as when an Arrow, or other Instrument is sharpened, that it may pierce the deeper. It implyeth two duties, 1. That the Parent make his Instructions delivered, plain and piercing, by perspicuity giving it an edge, that it may the more easily enter into the dull heads, and

pierce the hard hearts of his Children. 2. That he repeat it again and again, going often over the same thing, as the Knife goeth often over the whet-stone, as the beast in chewing the Cud. *Abraham* is highly commended of God for instructing his Family. I know *Abraham* will command his Sons, and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, *Genes.* 18. 19. He taught them the substance of the Law, in commanding them to do Righteousness and Judgment: and the substance of the Gospel, in declaring unto them the tenour of the Evangelical promises: that in him, or his seed, that is in Christ (the promised seed, who was to come of his loins) all the Nations of the earth should be blessed: as also the meaning of Circumcision. *Genes.* 17. 23. *Joshua* professed, that he and his house would serve the Lord, *Jos.* 24. 15. Intimating, that he would instruct his Family in the true knowledge, and right manner of the worship of God, without which they could not perform any acceptable service unto him. *David* taught his Son *Solomon*, and laid this Charge upon him, *And thou Solomon my Son, know the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind,* 1 Chron. 28:9. So others, *Psal.* 34.

II. *Come ye Children, hearken to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Thus Solomon instructeth his Son *Rehoboam* in the beginning of the Book of the Proverbs. *Hezekiah* professeth as much of himself. *The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: The Father to the Son shall declare thy truth,* *Isai.* 38. 19. He established a testimony in *Jacob*, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our Fathers, that they should make them known to their Children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his Commandements, and might not be as their Fathers, a stubborn, and rebellious generation, &c.

IV. Have a watchful eye over the duties, practices and conversations of your Children. *David* would not suffer a worker of deceit to dwell in his house, nor a teller of lies to tarry in his sight, *Psal.* 101. 7. Oh, take heed of countenancing or allowing your Children in any sin. Their sins, and thy neglect of godly reproof, will make thee stink in the Land as *Simeon* and *Levi* made *Jacob* their Father to stink, his name to stink among the people of the Land. Take heed of cockering, and over-much indulging your Children. It is observed, that usually

that Child which the Parent cockereth most, regardeth the Parent least; and many times proveth the heaviest cross unto it: making him to speak in bitterness of Soul, Why died it not from the womb? *Job 3. 11.*

Bolton's
Direct.
p. 19.

One saith, That the bloody knife of Parents unconscionable and cruel neglect in training up their Children religiously, doth stick full deep in their Souls. We have read and heard of some Children that have been loosely trained up, who have pierced their Parents hearts with sorrow, yea and their throats too, who have stuck the knife in the bowels of their Parents.

Woodw.
Child's
Patrim.

A certain fond Mother must not have her Child corrected at School when he deserved correction. Not long after the Child angered the Mother, and the Mother struck the Child: he runs to the fire, and up with the fire-fork, and at the Mother he makes, threatening what he would do. The Mother would not have her Child struck with a rod, to let out his folly, and the Child offers to strike the Mother with the fire-fork. Then the Mother hastens to the School-master, as much displeased with the Child, as ever before she was pleased with it. Another Parent so doted upon her Child, that she could not endure it

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out of her sight: but at last he proved so dissolute, that she would have sent this Son to the remotest Islands: any where, so he were on ship-board (that would keep him in compass, which a Prison did not) or out of her sight. That Child which the Parent so coddleth, that it must not be out of his sight, is the Child that is most like to be an eye-sore, and heart-grief to the Parent, to whom the Parent is most like to say, *Stand out of my sight*, thou art a burden to me. S. Augustine gives us a sad relation of one *Cyrellus*, a man mighty both in word and work, but a very fond and indulgent Father. One Son he had, and but one, and because but one,

Agust. Serm.
33. ad Fratres
in Exemo.

he must have his will; he must not feel the rod, he must not be crossed. He might have what he would, and do what he listed; he might go forth, and return when he pleased; he gave no account either of his purse or time: we read in the story, that this Child brought his Mother to shame; nay, more than so. This Child came home drunk, and in the day time he violently and shamefully abused his Mother great with Child, he killed his Father out-right, and mortally wounded two Sisters. Hereupon a great Assembly was called, that all Parents hearing

ing so sad and lamentable a Tragedy, might for ever beware of this loose and sottish indulgence, which brings woe to the Parent, and ruine to the Child.

V. Pray for your Children, that they may glorifie God. and so be your glory and crown, this was *Job's* practice, *Job* 1. 5. *Job sent, and sanctified his Children, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all.* While his Children were feasting, he was fasting: while they were merry, he was mourning and sacrificing, lest his Sons should blaspheme and dishonour God. A godly Father's Prayers do fly to Heaven, and return into the bosom of his posterity with rich and precious blessings. If these rules I have propounded here, were well and conscionably observed, Parents and Children would be a crown and glory to one another: and God would set an incorruptible crown of glory upon the heads both of Parents and Children.

CHAP. VIII.

SECT. I.

THis in the next place may serve for a just conviction of those whose Fathers lived in gross errors, and wicked practices, & think it no dishonor to them to live and do as their Fathers did before them. When *Hezekiah*

zekiah sent the Posts from City to City through the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* with this Message, that he would have a Reformation according to the first Institution and pattern, and would not have them abide any longer in the wayes of their Fathers, it is said, *2 Chron. 29. 10.* They laughed the Messengers to scorn. They mock'd them, what, must we be wiser than our Fathers? See what answer is given to them, *Be not ye like your Fathers, which trespassed against the Lord God of your Fathers, ver. 7.* They that will erre by their Fathers Copy, may also perish by their Fathers example. In the beginning of King *James* his Reign in *England*, the Papists made a Supplication to that King of happy memory: one branch whereof was this. We request no more favour at your Graces hands, than that we may securely profess that Catholick Religion, which all your happy Predecessors professed, from *Donaldus*, the first converted, unto your Majesties Peerless Mother. And to this purpose doth Dr. *Kellison* recite unto that King, a long Catalogue of his noble Predecessors, to encline him (if possible) to embrace the Popish Religion.

Many of our Fathers lived in times of ignorance: had they lived in the light which

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we do, it is not probable they would have lived in such gross errors and superstitions as they did. Therefore we are not hand over head to follow all that our Fathers did, but try them, and follow the best. When *Frederick* the IV. Elector of the Roman Empire, and Count *Palatine* of the *Rhine*, was by a certain Prince advised, for his Religion to follow the example of his Father *Lewis*, his answer was, *In Religione, non Parentum, non majorum exempla sequenda, sed tantum voluntas Dei.* In matters of Religion, we must neither follow the examples of Parents, nor Ancestors, but the will of God only is to be regarded. And for this resolution, he alledged the testimony of the Lord out of *Ezek. 20. Walk ye not in the Statutes of your Fathers, nor observe their Judgements, nor defile your selves with their Idols: I am the Lord, walk ye in my Statutes,* vers. 18, 19. Therefore it was a good Confession of the Church, *Psal. 106. 6. We have erred with our Fathers.* *S. Hierom* once desired of *S. Augustine*, that he might have leave to erre with seven Fathers whom he found of his opinion. I should not crave that leave, nor envy any one the priviledge. The Fathers are but Children when they erre: and they who will erre with their Fathers, are more foolish than Children.

Sect.

SECT. II.

THere are many others that make the manners of their Fathers, the rule of their life and conversation. The Children of idle Beggars take up the same wandering course of life as their Fathers did before them. And it is commonly seen (for the most part) that whole Families are tainted with the same vices of their Stock. *John Baptist* speaks of a generation of Vipers. So if we look abroad into the world, we shall see generations of Swearers, generations of Drunkards, generations of Idolaters, of Worldlings, of unclean persons. *Ahab* was a very none-such in wickedness: and all that come from him, are like him in evil manners. It is said of his Son *Abaziah*, that next succeeded him in the Kingdom of Israel, *1 Kings 22. 25.* That *he walked in the way of his Father, and in the way of his Mother: in the way of wicked Ahab, and cursed Jezebel.* There was another *Abaziah*, King of *Judah*; the Grand-child of *Jehosaphat* by the Fathers side, and of *Ahab* by the Mothers side: He drew poison from the Mother, and so trod in the paths of *Ahab*. The Scripture saith expressly of him, *2 Reg. 8. 27.* That *he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did*

did evil in the sight of the Lord, as did the house of Ahab, for he was the Son in Law of the house of Ahab. Oh what mischief cometh to many a man, and his whole stock, by joyning himself in affinity with a wicked Family!

See the wilful resolution of a generation of Idolaters, *Jerem. 44. 17, 18, 19.* We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth of our own mouth, to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-offerings to her, as we have done: we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes in the Cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: For then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-offerings to her, have we wanted all things, and have been consumed by the Sword and by Famine. How doth our Saviour complain of the Pharisees, *Matth. 23. 32, 33, 35.* Wherefore ye be witnesses to your selves, that ye are the Children of them that killed the Prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your sins, ye Serpents, ye generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?

CHAP. IX.

SECT. I.

IT becometh every one of us therefore to confess our own sins, & the sins of our Fathers, *Nehem. 9. 2.* *The seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood, and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their Fathers.* So in vers. 16. *But they, and our Fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy Commandments.* And vers. 33. 34. Speaking of the Judgements of God, that came upon them for their sins, they say, *How be it thou art just in all that is brought upon us: for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: neither have our Kings, our Princes, our Priests, nor our Fathers, kept thy Law, nor hearkened to thy Commandments, and thy Testimonies, wherewith thou didst testifie against them.* Moreover, it is worth observing, that the Holy Ghost doth not record their sins which they confessed, as their own present abounding sins, but recordeth the sins of their Fathers, which they confessed before God, as appeareth from the ninth to the 30th. verse. It is not recorded, we dealt proudly,

we

we hardened our necks, we refused to obey, we were disobedient and rebellious. No question, this was their own carriage towards God. But it is said [They] meaning their Fathers: They dealt proudly, they hardened their necks, &c. Furthermore observe, they did not insist upon the sins of their immediate Progenitors, but upon the sins and rebellions of their Fathers that came out of the Land of Egypt, and first inhabited Canaan. They make mention of their Fathers sins, as if all their misery came upon them chiefly for their Fathers Sins, rather than for their own Sins.

What reason can there be assigned, why the Holy Ghost makes such a record of their Confession of their Fathers Sins, rather than of their own, if it be not to convince, and shew what we ought to do, viz. Not only to lay our own sins to heart, and to confess them before God, but also the sins of our Fathers: as also to shew us, that the iniquities of our Fathers do bring the dreadful Judgements of God like a flood upon us, as well as our own sins, *Jerem. 3. 25. We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us, for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our Fathers, from our Youth even to this day, and have not obeyed the Voice of the Lord*

our God : And *Jerem.* 16. 19. The Prophet cries out thus to God. O Lord, my strength and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, surely our Fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit, *Lam.* 5. 7. The Church cries out : Our Fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have born their iniquities.

SECT. II.

ONE reason why we should be humbled for the sins of our Fathers, as well as for our own is, because God hath threatned, and accordingly hath visited the sins of the Fathers upon their Children. Their Idolatries have brought destruction on their posterity : the Fathers-adulteries have brought the Children to a morsel of bread. That God hath threatned to visit the sins of the Fathers on the Children, you find in the second Commandement [*visiting the sins of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth generation.*] So *Exod.* 34. 7. That God hath visited Children with Plagues for the Iniquities of their Fathers, there are manifold sad instances of it, *Numb.* 14. 32, 33. Ye may see a double punishment threatened.

1. Against the Fathers who murmured, But

as for you, your carkeſſes ſhall fall in this wilderneſs, verſ. 32. 2. Againſt the Children, who certainly did not partake in that Sin; for many of them were Infants, verſ. 33. *And your Children ſhall wander in the wilderneſs forty years, and bear your whoredoms untill your carkeiſſes be waſted in the wilderneſs, 1. Sam. 15. 3.* The Lord commandeth Saul to go, and ſmite *Amalek*, and utterly to deſtroy all that they have, and ſpare them not: but ſlay both man and woman, infant and ſuckling, oxe and ſheep, camel and aſs. Now ſee what reaſon the Lord renders, why *Saul* ſhould put all the *Amalakites* to the ſword, verſ. 2. Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, *I remember what Amalek did to Iſrael, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.* Now the Children muſt be deſtroyed for the ſins of their Progenitors, So the Infants, and little Children of the *Sodomites*, periſhed by fire and brimſtone for the horrid abominations which their Fathers had committed. What a dreadful Judgement did God inflict upon old *Eli* for his ſin? So the Lord told *David*, that the Sword ſhould never depart from his houſe, becauſe of his ſin, 2. *Sam. 12. 9, 10.* How did God viſit *Saul's* perfidiouſneſs to the *Gibeonites*, on his poſterity? 2 *Sam. 21. 1.* There is a double Judgement;

Judgement, he visited the Kingdom with Famine for three years, vers. 1, and visited his Children with a cursed and shameful death, vers. 6. they were all hanged. How did our Saviour threaten the Jewes with all the blood which their Fathers had shed causelessly? Wherefore behold, I send unto you Prophets, and wise men, and Scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucifie, and some of them shall ye scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from City to City, *That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, the Son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar, Matth. 23. 34, 35.* And is not the blood of Christ upon the Children of the Jewes unto this day? I have brought the more Instances to shew the truth, how God doth punish the Children for the sins of their Fathers: to convince us, of what concernment it is for us to confess their sins before the Lord, as well as our own; and to deterre Fathers from sinning against God. Ye may see, that Fathers in sinning, do not only sin to their own destruction, but to the destruction of the Children that are yet unborn: ye lay up Estates and Portions for your Children, and God layes up wrath and vengeance,

which shall consume both them and their Estates.

CHAP. X.

NOW because there are objections, which perhaps may arise in your thoughts against this Doctrine, and they seem to be grounded on Scripture, I shall endeavour to remove them.

Object. But it is said, *Ezek. 18. 4. The Soul that sinneth, it shall die, vers. 18. as for his Father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, so even he shall die in his iniquity.* So in *Jerem. 31. 29, 30. In those dayes they shall say no more, the Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the Childrens teeth are set on edge, but every one shall die for his own iniquity: and every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.* How can these Scriptures be reconciled with that in the second commandment, where God is said to visit the sins of the Fathers upon the Children to the third and fourth generation, &c. how can it agree with these dispensations of Judgements?

Sol. There are divers answers given hereunto.

I. Origen, and some others make an allegorical Interpretation, and say, that by the third

third and fourth generation is not meant Children, but so many degrees of sins, as if God would spare men for the first and second fault, and punish the third and fourth. But this is a false and foolish conceit, because God sometimes punisheth men for the first sin. God chastised *David* for one act of adultery.

II. Some answer it by distinction of civil and divine punishments. The Civil Law, which God made for the Common-wealth of *Israel*, did forbid to put the Child to death for the sin of the Father: as *Deut. 24. 16.* The Fathers shall not be put to death for the Children, nor shall the Children be put to death for the Fathers: Every man shall be put to death for his own sin. But God, who is the supreme Judge of the whole world, and is not tied to humane Law, punisheth Children for their Fathers sins. But this answer is not sufficient, for those places of *Jerem. 31.* and *Ezek. 18.* speak not of a civil, but of a divine punishment.

III, Others again answer it thus, that God punisheth the sins of Fathers on their Children, if they do such like sins as their Father: He will punish the Children for their Fathers Idolatry, if their Children are Idolaters also, and punish them that hate God, as their Fathers did before them.

If this were true, then those places in *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel* were answered with this exception. The Son shall not bear the iniquity of his Father, unless the Son be wicked too: the Childrens teeth shall not be set on edge unless they eat sowre grapes, as their Fathers did before them. But this answer is not to the purpose neither.

1. Because Children have been punished for their Fathers sins, which they never imitated, as the Children of the *Sodomites* were destroyed with the same destruction their Fathers were.

2. Sometimes the Children who have repented, have been outwardly miserable, because their Fathers were exceeding sinful.

3. Because then God did not punish the sins of their Fathers on them, so much as their own personal sins: nor punish their Fathers Idolatry, but their own Idolatry; nor their Fathers Adultery, but their own.

4. The force of the threatening is taken away; for God brings that threatening of visiting their Idolatry upon their Children, to make Fathers to take heed of Idolatry. Then this would be the sense of it, according to their interpretation. Take heed, ye Fathers, of Idolatry, for I will punish your third and fourth generation if they be Idolaters. By these

these reasons it is evident, that this answer, that God punisheth Children for their Fathers sins, because Children follow their Fathers in their sins, is not sufficient.

IV. This answer may give full satisfaction. There is a three-fold evil of punishment, with which God visits sinners.

1. There is eternal damnation: so no Child is punished for his Fathers sins, but *the Soul that sinneth, that shall die*. Every man is damned for his own proper sins: only such as eat the sowre grapes of sin, they shall gnash their teeth in Hell.

2. There is *malum morale*, a moral evil. God his giving up the Children to follow their Fathers steps, is a punishment for their Fathers sins. But this God doth not inflict upon them as they are sins, but by denying grace to the Children of wicked Parents, upon which denial they fall into the like sins their Fathers did before them. God denying grace to the posterity of Idolaters, they commit Idolatry also.

3. There is *malum naturæ*, evils of nature; as Losses, Crosses, Afflictions, Famine, Sword, Plague, temporal death. God oftentimes punisheth the Children for their Fathers sins with these temporal punishments: For *Gehazi's* Covetousness, his posterity

shall be leprous, and for the mutiny of *Dathan* and *Abiram*, their Children perished with them. For *David's* Adultery, the Sword shall never depart from his house to all successions: So oftentimes it falls out, that for the riot, adulteries, or oppressions of Progenitors, Children are brought to a morsel of bread. The reason is, because God in punishing the Children, punisheth the Fathers also, *Quia Filii quaedam pars parentum*, because Children are part of their Fathers, as branches are part of the tree: therefore the good that is bestowed on the Child, or the evil inflicted on him, is the good and evil of the Father.

Quest. But how can the evils which Children suffer when their Fathers are dead, be a punishment to him that is dead? how can the evil which the fourth generation suffereth, be the evil of the Father, dead it may be many years before?

Resp. 1. I answer yes, they are evils to them, because God threatens them as punishments to them. Shall we think, that God would threaten this as an evil, if it were not? look as other evils threatned, which follow the wicked after they are dead, are a punishment: as the name of the wicked shall rot, shall sink when they are dead: They that pass

pass by their graves shall say, Here lieth a beastly drunkard; here lieth a profane swearer, a cruel oppressour. These are curses, though they are not sensible of them. So, when God shall ruine the posterity of wicked men, it is a sore punishment to them. As now it is a mercy to just men, that their memory (when they are dead) shall be blessed, and that the seed of the Righteous shall be blessed on earth. Then on the contrary, if the seed of a man be cursed, it is a punishment to the Fathers.

2. We are not to judge of punishment only by our sense and feeling, as if it were no punishment, because dead men are not sensible of the miseries of their Children: but we are also to judge of punishment by the evil which is in it. Now it is a sore evil, when God shall for the sins of our Fathers bring ruine upon our estates, miseries upon our bodies, Plagues, Sword, or Famine upon us.

3. It is a punishment to the Fathers, though dead; because it is directly contrary to their wills and intentions. Fathers would have their Children, rich and happy after their death, and would have their Houses and Names to continue for ever: but God in justice ruins their Families, and cloatheth their Children or Childrens Children with misery as with a garment.

Ob-

Object. But put the case, the posterity of wicked men are converted, and become godly, doth God punish such for the sins of their Fathers?

Sol. I answer yes, God sometimes may, and doth deprive such of their honours and estates, and takes them away with temporal death for the sins of their Fathers. But then the evils which such Children endure, are only *parentum poene*, their Fathers punishment, and are *filiorum probationes, medicine, exercitia*, the Childrens tryals, medicines, exercises. God in mercy turneth their afflictions into their spiritual advantage: God makes their death a passage to glory, and life eternal. And these afflictions, (though they are the punishments of their Fathers, yet shall work out for them a greater weight of glory. Here let me add these things.

1. We must hold this as an undeniable truth, that God is alwayes righteous in all his administrations of Judgements, whether in punishing Parents, or Children for Parents sake. Though the Judgements of God are sometime hidden, yet they are never unjust. There is no iniquity in the wayes of God, though we cannot see the equity of them.

2. There is a matter of condemnation in all

all Children, though God sometimes in punishing, doth not punish them with an immediate relation to their own sins.

3. When God visits Nations and Kingdoms, then usually he doth it for the sins of the present generation, as for the sins of our Fathers. Our sins, and the iniquities of our Fathers do joyn forces to bring down Plagues and devastations upon the Kingdom. The Jews were led into Captivity for their own sins, and their Fathers also. So *Daniel* in his Confession of sins acknowledgeth, We, our Kings, our Princes, our Fathers, and all Israel have sinned.

CHAP. XI.

GREAT are the benefits, which may redound to Children sincerely confessing the iniquities of their Fathers, as well as their own sins. The Promise is made, *Levit.* 26. 40, 41, 42. *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their Fathers, with their trespasss which they have trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary to me, and that I have also walked contrary to them, &c. Then will I remember my Covenant with Jacob, and also my Covenant with Isaac, and also my Covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the Land.*

1. Sometime it procureth and obtaineth a delay, and putting off the pouring forth the wrath of God upon a Family, Person, or Nation. God oftentimes delayeth the punishments, not remitting the sins. As upon *Abab's* humiliation, he delayed the punishment, but did not remit the sins of him and his house; yet for his humiliation, the punishment should be prorogued to his Son's daies, *2 Reg. 21. 29.* Upon *Moses* his humiliation for *Israel's* murmuring, he remitted the execution of his wrath, but remitted not their sin, *Numb. 14. 18. ad 23.* We have a clear Instance for this in *Josiah*, who humbled himself for the iniquities of his Fathers, and the sins of *Israel*: and the Lord put off the execution of his wrath, till he was laid in his grave, *2 Chron. 34. 21, 24, ad 28.* Perhaps the second generation may die in peace; or it may be the third and the fourth generation shall bear the iniquities of their Fathers, it is no small mercy that wrath breaks not in upon the first generation.

2. If it doth not keep off, and procure delay of execution, but wrath from the Lord breaks in upon us, yet it may mitigate the wrath of God: so that God (though justly he might) yet proceeds not to a final devastation of Persons, Families and Kingdoms, but

a remnant may, and shall escape, *Jerem. 39.* 16, 17, 18. Thus God bids *Jeremy* tell *Ebed-melech* the Ethiopian, that though he would bring his words upon the City of *Jernsalem* for evil; yet say thou to him, *I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the Sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee, because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.* And that God made them not as *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, but left a remnant, *Ezra* 9. 8. *And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.* When people are generally stubborn and wicked, God sometimes makes a full end of them, when their determinate day of visitation is come upon them, he overthrowes Families, as he overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, cutting down root and branch, and casting them into the fire.

3. Sometimes it procureth a shortening of the day of visitation, God will not lengthen out their judgement: will not (as justly he might) spin out their time of calamity. For mine elects sake these dayes of calamity shall be shortened. The day of *Jernsalem's* calamity

calamity should be shortened for his elect which were in it.

4. If God yet visit the iniquities of our Fathers upon us, he will change the nature of our punishments: though they be to the destruction of our estates and bodies, yet they shall be to the Salvation of our Souls in the day of the Lord Jesus: he will inflict them upon us as trials and fatherly chastisements, doing us good in the latter end; though in relation to the iniquities of our Fathers, they be sore punishments.

Moreover, we ought to be humbled for the sins of our Fathers, because God was dishonoured by them. *Nehemiah* was ashamed, and confounded for his Fathers sins, as well as his own. That God was dishonoured in former years, grieveth a godly heart, as well as in present times.

Besides—the sins of our Fathers are reproaches to us. That men should say of such a man, his Father before him was a drunkard, an oppressour, an idolater; so was his Grand-Father, his Great-Grand-Father before him; this is a reproach unto the Family: the best way to wipe off the reproach, is for the posterity to mourn for their Fathers sins: the godliness of Children will be some covering to their Fathers nakedness.

But

But if our Fathers greatly provoked the Lord,
and we are not humbled for their sins, but
walk in the steps of our evil Progenitors;
then hear what the Lord saith to such, *Isai.*
14. 20, 21, 22. *The seed of evil doers shall
never be renowned: prepare slaughter for his
Children for the iniquity of their Fathers, that
they do not rise, nor possess the Land, nor fill
the face of the world with Cities: for I will rise
up against them, saith the Lord of Hosts, and
cut off from Babylon the Name and Remnant,
and Son and Nephew, saith the Lord.*

FINIS.
